
UNIT 12 SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Structure

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12.1 INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is often considered synonymous to terms like familiarity, understanding, wisdom, education, awareness etc. Since the days of the earliest civilizations like Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China knowledge has remained a major tool of change of almost all societies. You may be aware that in the ancient times, knowledge was based upon natural environment and local knowledge. History of knowledge is full of instances of human beings managing to reduce the impact of events such as famines. You may have also noticed that in the rural areas, the traditional healers do have a special place in the life of their communities. So one may ask 'What is the social organization of knowledge'?

In this Unit, we shall discuss various aspects of knowledge as may be expressed at various levels. The whole process of organization of knowledge may be divide into three areas – knowledge creation, knowledge accumulation and knowledge dissemination/transfer. We shall particularly examine the areas of 'knowledge creation' and 'knowledge transfer'. We shall deliberately avoid 'knowledge storage' since this is beyond the scope of this Unit. This Unit will therefore be discussing both, the traditional and the modern aspects of knowledge organization.

12.2 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning of 'knowledge';
- Know about forms of knowledge;
- Appreciate the relationship between the traditional and modern forms of knowledge; and
- Know about the National Knowledge Commission of India and its reports.

12.3 DEFINITION, MEANING AND SCOPE

Educational scholars, like all other scholars in the field of social sciences differ on the true definition of the term knowledge; however they all agree that the definition of knowledge should include:

- Familiarity gained through sight, experience, or oral report,
- Some information that is or may be known.

Educationists see some relationship between knowledge and learning. Knowledge here is seen as facts or ideas that come out of studies, investigation, observation or experience while learning largely means knowledge which is acquired through formal schooling.

Knowledge can be expressed in the form of data, scientific formulae, product specifications, manuals, universal principles, and so forth. This kind of knowledge can be readily transmitted to individual learners through formal and systematic means. This has been the dominant form of knowledge in the West. In Japan, however, this form has been seen as just the tip of the iceberg. They view knowledge as being primarily tacit, something not easily visible and expressible.

Tacit knowledge is personal and individualized and at times hard to formalize, making it difficult to communicate or share with others with convincing arguments. Subjective insights, intuitions and hunches fall into this category of knowledge. Furthermore, tacit knowledge is deep rooted in an individual's actions and experiences, as well as in the ideals, values or emotions he or she embraces.

12.4 TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

Explicit knowledge: This form of knowledge is capable of being expressed in words or may be numbers. It can be shared either through electronic devices or through traditional means. Explicit knowledge can be transmitted to a wider section of the society and has been the major form of Western knowledge as opposed to the Japanese understanding that knowledge is something that is not easily visible and/or can be expressed.

Tacit knowledge: This form of knowledge can be said to be highly personal and difficult to communicate or share with others. It includes such knowledge as subjective insights and intuitions. Tacit knowledge is dependent upon one's actions and ideals, values or emotions.

Received Knowledge: Knowledge can also be seen as facts and correct information with instructors (teachers) being seen as experts who have mastered the required facts. It is the duty of the teacher to present knowledge through such devices as notes, assist the learner to commit it to memory and to test its mastery.

Subjective Knowledge: Knowledge is occasionally characterized by absence of unanimous accepted facts. You may have noticed, for example, that various scholars do not agree on some basic things such as definition of common disciplines. This has meant that learners too are encouraged to develop the present level of knowledge as per their experience and understanding. Under subjective knowledge, the opinion of the teacher is never final, since teachers act as facilitators of knowledge, guiding learners to how to achieve their fullest potential.

Procedural Knowledge: This view considers knowledge as neither factual nor made up of correct answers. It argues that no single scholar has fully understood the facts to enable him/her to force his/her opinion on others. It extends learners a chance to express

what they consider as complex problems with evidence. It assumes that the teachers are equipped and well informed to assist the learners in analyzing the challenges through different situations/alternatives. Knowledge here is made of different facts and experiences.

Constructed Knowledge: It views knowledge as contextual and relative, uncertain and tentative, yet capable of making positions, choices and commitments to oneself. A knowledgeable person is one who is fully aware of uncertainty but still has the courage to encourage learners towards informed opinions and reasoned judgments and commitments. It considers learning as going beyond academics to create learners with a universal view of the world.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Define knowledge and identify its meaning and scope.

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- 2) Mention the various types of knowledge.

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12.5 MODES OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

It needs to be mentioned that whenever something new comes up, the general tendency is to oppose it because normally we oppose change and prefer status-quo, even without fully understanding the benefits of such new ventures. This is true of human beings who often resist taking up new challenges and are opposed to their existing socio-economic and political conditions and also any new invention or finding. What this means for the transfer of knowledge is that simply making new knowledge available may not result in it being transferred and accepted by all. The process of knowledge transfer is further complicated because those who have the knowledge may be ignorant of their capacities or may be considering their knowledge as less significant and may end up not transferring the same to others. However, the following may be some of the modes of knowledge transfer:

12.5.1 Digital Divide or Opportunity

Digital divide or opportunity may not be readily available throughout the world even though their availability is widespread. In recent times the system of knowledge accumulation has greatly changed because of the developments in computer and information saving devices. This development has created a divide between those who can afford to access the knowledge resources and those who do not have the resources to access these resources. The divide is further increased by learning the skills which enables one to access the resources. Those who do not have the skills can be further deprived.

The low cost telecommunication system has been instrumental in helping societies to leapfrog through open distance education and through a much better market access and private sector partners abroad.

12.5.2 Migration of Individuals Across the Globe

Migration of individuals across the globe is a major mode of knowledge transfer across continents and cultures. Interregional relations have further been boosted through the use of technologies: computers, radio, and video-conferencing for open distance learning (ODL) which offers avenues for knowledge dissemination to a worldwide audiences.

12.5.3 Reinterpretation of Knowledge

Reinterpretation of knowledge was a common mode of knowledge transfer particularly during the ancient times. As a philosopher, Plato used dialogues to transfer the information accumulated in the writings and teachings of Socrates which was later passed on to future generations. *Analects* of Confucius, *The Art of War* of Sun Tzu, or the Pyramids of Egypt which have also served similar knowledge sharing functions.

12.5.4 Recorded Devices

Recorded devices such as reports of debates, resolutions of meetings, memoranda, conference proceedings, and document filing systems maintained by organizations have been used to transfer knowledge to a wider audience.

12.5.5 Easy Availability and Use of ICT Gadgets

Easy availability and use of ICT gadgets such as Internet, SMS and other communication devices have become widespread in reaching out to large sections of the modern day societies. Other ICT devices commonly used to capture and disseminate knowledge content include electronic databases, audio and video recordings, interactive tools, multimedia documents and so on.

12.6 FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

12.6.1 Traditional Forms of Knowledge

Most of the current knowledge is drawn from traditional forms of knowledge passed over from the ancient civilizations such as ancient Greece, India, Mesopotamia, China, Egypt and similar other civilizations. It can further be argued that when each of these major civilizations came into contact with other civilizations, it led to a refined understanding of knowledge. As a member of society, you may have noted that there is a corpus of knowledge both at the level of the classical texts and the folk traditions in areas such as Medicine, Arithmetic, Agriculture, Grammar, Language, Dance, Music, Astrology etc. Those conversant with the Hindu mythology must be aware of the role played by the *Shastras* and *Lok Paramparas*.

Medicine: There exists in all societies some form of traditional medicine, for example India has one of the longest and unbroken health tradition (*Ayurvedic*, *Siddha* etc.), with well skilled practitioners, textual and theoretical knowledge. Attempts have been made, both at private and government levels, to expand the use and presence of these traditional forms of knowledge to far flung areas such as U.S.A, Europe, Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. It should be noted that the Indian medical tradition is prevalent at two levels: classical and folk. The codified systems of treatment that includes *Siddha*, *Ayurveda* and *Unani* is practiced by trained practitioners similar to those trained at the modern medical colleges whereas 'folk' system of medicine (*Lok parampara*) which is essentially oral in character and is passed from one generation to another (like from father to son, *guru* to *shishya*). The traditional form of knowledge involves local remedies and cure for such sickness as in:

- Being able to take health care.
- Knowledge of common cures such as may be possessed by *Vaidus*, *Nattu Vaidhyars*, *Bhagats*.

- Traditional sayings and proverbs on health systems.
- Beliefs on such food as *Pathyam* and *Apathyam*. There are foods to be preferred or avoided during specific diseases or conditions
- There are also specialists for specific diseases such as asthma, rabies (*Visha Chikitsa*) and impotence.
- Traditional birth attendants who perform delivery at home.

Folk Traditions

Folk traditions have their origin among the common people's practices, customs, or stories and is spread or passed down orally, often with considerable variation between individuals and period. These traditions are more often common in rural areas with peasant cultures. A common characteristic is that it is accepted in the community, and is passed orally and is ever-changing. Folk traditions are aided by such tools as may include poetic devices such as rhymes and alliteration. Folk traditions are part of knowledge transferring system. Folk traditions are today showing dynamism and continue to develop with some support from governments as was the case when the government of India took up a study of the knowledge and use of natural resources by the tribal communities in 1980s. The report showed that tribal communities in India have working knowledge of thousands of plant species which can be used for medicinal purposes.

It is worth identifying the close relationship between folk and classical traditions. This relationship is captured by the theory of composition of matter (Panchamahabhoota) and the theory of causation of disease (Tridosha). A further relationship is noticed between the technical terminologies such as Pitta, Kapha, Ushna, Laghu, Guru, Sheeta, and Guna. The classical texts such as Charaka-Samhitha states that - "Oushadihi naama roopabhyaam, jananthe hyajapaa vane, avipaashchaiva gopaashcha ye cha Anye vanavaasinaha" - "the goat herds, shepherds, cowherds and other forest dwellers know the drugs by name and form.

Folk traditions represent a more economic ally efficient way to transfer and obtain knowledge of all kinds. Economists such as Thomas Sowell have observed that decision-making is time consuming as compared cultural traditions which offers a rich, low-cost, consensually authenticated way to economize on the resources required to make decisions independently.

We need to note that some traditions may be relevant only for some specific issues such as may be to highlight or enhance the importance of a certain institution.

Traditional Knowledge Through Proverbs

Nearly every one has some proverbial knowledge. Proverbs has been used down the ages by a cross section of cultures. In West Africa, for example, proverbs are said to be "... the palm oil with which words are eaten". That which a proverb explains in one sentence may be written down in large paragraphs; hence proverbs provide a simpler and intelligent way of passing over some message. These proverbs' may be touching on food habits, treatment and personal etiquette.

Traditional Understanding of Seasonal Changes

Ayurvedic scholars are of the teaching that it is Agni within us that is charged with digestion of food received from outside. During summer, for example, our digestive system becomes weak while it becomes stronger in winter. The knowledge of seasonal variations and different food requirements has meant that in summer, the body readily accepts liquids and light foods that are easy to digest.

12.6.2 Modern Forms of Knowledge

It is wrong to view knowledge as that part of information contained in books or the facts they have learned in schools. Teaching is not merely transmitting knowledge (information) from the source (a brain or a textbook) to the learner's brain. This view is wrong because the learner cannot be seen as a cup that must be filled with information. In modern times, knowledge means more than just the collection of information. It is 'information' presented through a good structure for easy location and access.

An individual's knowledge is based upon his/her ability to organize and link the acquired information together. It is the duty of teachers to facilitate the process of learning while the learner's duty is to construct knowledge. This means that each learner has a unique way of organizing the acquired information. Generally, knowledge construction involves four steps of:

- All knowledge is based upon existing knowledge
- Secondly, each knowledge must be well-organized
- Learning involves mental activity, which requires learners to be well motivated
- Learning depends upon reflection as a powerful tool for learning.

A brief illustration of the above four steps is presented below.

All knowledge is Based upon Existing Knowledge

Much of our understanding about modern education is derived from the works of John Dewey who advocated that education should be based upon the experience of the society and individuals (*his theory of experience*). According to Dewey's understanding, humans are sensitive to (or are affected by) experience. In this case, each person learns more from experience than do many other animals who rely primarily on pre-wired instinct. Education has a critical role of providing people with the skills to live a useful life in the society. Dewey further noted that what is learnt may both be positive or negative; hence each experience is stored and carried on into the future experiences. Dewey further observes that 'past experiences interacts with the present' to influence the present experience. In this regard, current experiences should be understood as a function of the past (stored experiences) interacting with the present experience to create an individual's experience. This explains reasons for people holding different opinion on the same situation (i.e. in class, some learners may prefer one subject teacher while others in the same class may not be in favor of the same teacher).

Knowledge Must be Well-Organized

Knowledge learnt in either setting (traditional or modern) need to be well organized so as to be capable of application in new situations. As a student of education, you must have learnt the various aspects of teaching in different class situations. In this regard, you will be evaluated more and more not on the examinations you passed but on your ability to apply the knowledge to the classroom situation i.e. ability to transfer knowledge to learners in a way as to:

- Organize the knowledge in memory to allow efficient application.
- Know when to apply the relevant information.

It has been noted that teachers who cannot organize knowledge and to transfer are missing an important aspect of the teaching profession. Knowledge organization and application are dependent upon the setting of the learning experience and the setting in which the knowledge must be applied.

Learning Involves Mental Activity

Learning is part of an intentional and purposeful processing of information. Mental activity requires strategies that promote the manipulation of information so that learners

can acquire both lesson knowledge and deeper conceptual insight. Learning is the ability to recall or recognize specific facts, or procedural patterns and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. Educationists have listed six major categories of mental activity depending on the degree of difficulties as:

- Knowledge involving recognition and recall of information.
- Comprehension involving interpretations, translation or summaries.
- Application of information learnt to a new situation.
- Analysis of the situation to arrive at a clear
- Synthesis of the different parts into a new entity from the original one.
- Evaluation of the facts of decision making based on some predetermined criteria or rationale.

Reflection as a Powerful Tool for Learning

In the earlier Units, you have already learnt that learning is enhanced when learners are able to make connections between the content being presented and their own experiences (both past and present). The term given in most learning theories to this process is “reflection”.

You may have entered into the master’s programme of study with vast range of work and life experiences. Reflection as a powerful tool for learning can best tap your experiences and so increase the learning potential. Teachers need to explore the power of reflection in transforming experiences into learning and to develop a range of models and techniques that they can use for the process of reflection. Teachers further need to expose learners to a variety of learning methods, enabling them to make sense of and learn from their own experiences whether these have been derived from life, work or classroom experiences.

Reflection as a powerful tool for learning therefore is a descriptive phrase that refers to attempts to prevent the unquestioning adoption of ideas without careful analysis. Its major aim is to provide critical evaluation of information, paying particular attention to both the positive and the negative aspects of the information being evaluated. As a teacher, you may be feeling that helping learners to develop and strengthen their capacity to think critically is an important objective of their pedagogy, and yet you may differ about the precise characterization of what learners try to inculcate. To clarify the concept of reflection further, consider the activities of a journal editor who critically evaluates research articles submitted for publication, making some recommendations before the article goes to the press for publication. The editor in this case is involved in a collection of overlapping mental activities such as intuiting, clarifying, reflecting, connecting, inferring and judging. It will be the duty of the editor to bring these activities together to evaluate the credibility, quality, impact, significance, usefulness or desirability of the research article on the basis of an implicit or explicit value system and a set of criteria of evaluation acceptable to the journal.

Check Your Progress 2

- 3) Write short notes on the traditional forms of knowledge.

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12.7 NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE COMMISSION OF INDIA

Every country, every area and even every group, howsoever small it may be, has its own corpus of knowledge which is in every case very crucial to that country, area or group. It is not only important but also very necessary to keep that knowledge corpus

alive and transfer it from generation to generation. The Government of India established a Commission to make recommendations to nurture the indigenous knowledge and further the process of knowledge creation and dissemination. However the NKC of India, it appears has not paid much attention to the traditional knowledge but devoted itself to modern methods and system of knowledge creation and dissemination.

The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) was established by the government of India on 13th June 2005. According to its chairman (Mr. Sam Pitroda), “The Commission was set up by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to prepare a blueprint to tap into the enormous reservoir of India’s knowledge base so that Indian people can confidently face challenges of the 21st century”. Five key areas related to Access, Concepts, Creation, Application and Service were identified for action. The commission was thus mandated to consider policy changes that will give India a comparative advantage in the knowledge-intensive service sectors. The government had felt the need for a reform in education, research institutes and intellectual property legislation. The NKC was therefore mandated to:

- “Build excellence in the educational system to meet the knowledge challenges of the 21st century and increase India’s competitive advantage in fields of knowledge.
- Promote creation of knowledge in science and technology laboratories.
- Improve the management of institutions engaged in Intellectual Property Rights.
- Promote knowledge applications in agriculture and industry.
- Promote the use of knowledge capabilities in making government an effective, transparent and accountable service provider to the citizen and promote widespread sharing of knowledge to maximize public benefit.”

The various issues which were addressed included reforming various institutions such as:

“a comprehensive reform of higher education, overhaul of public libraries, creation of a Knowledge Network, setting up of national portals, transformation of vocational education, re-engineering of government processes and making E-governance citizen-friendly”.

12.8 LET’S SUM UP

We started this Unit by looking at the nature and types of knowledge. We also looked at some modes of knowledge transfer where we noted that making new knowledge available may not result in it being transferred and accepted by all. We noted further that the process of knowledge transfer is further complicated because those who have the knowledge may be ignorant of their capacities or may be considering their knowledge as less significant and may end up not transferring the same to others. The process of knowledge transfer is further complicated because those who have the knowledge may be ignorant of their capacities or may be considering their knowledge as less significant and may end up not transferring the same to others. This unit also went into various forms of knowledge, giving particular emphasis to the traditional and modern approaches to education. The Unit ends by discussion the National Knowledge Commission of India and its mandate and major objectives of the Commission.

12.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

National Knowledge Commission Report (2006, 2007) access at:
<http://knowledgecommission.gov.in/about/default.asp>

UNIT 13 IDEOLOGY AND CURRICULUM

Structure

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objectives
- 13.3 Making Sense of Ideology
 - 13.3.1 Ideology as a Perspective
 - 13.3.2 Ideology as 'False Consciousness'
 - 13.3.3 Ideology and Hegemony
 - 13.3.4 Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Ideology
- 13.4 Ideology Shaping Curriculum
 - 13.4.1 Debunking 'Neutrality' of Schooling
- 13.5 Ideology and Curriculum in Post Independent India
 - 13.5.1 Education for Secular Modernity
 - 13.5.2 Cultural Nationalism and Changing Curriculum
 - 13.5.3 Globalization and Marketization of Education
 - 13.5.4 Protest Ideologies and Emancipatory Curriculum
- 13.6 Let's Sum Up
- 13.7 References and Suggested Readings

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Education, you would agree, is not something static and ahistorical. In fact, a careful look at history suggests that what we call education changes from time to time, and alters its priorities. These days you may feel that education ought to be secular, scientific and professional; it is like acquiring a technical skill, be it in engineering, medicine, law and management, and earning a livelihood. But then, as some of our ancient texts depict, when religious institutions were overwhelmingly powerful, education, far from being secular and technical, was essentially spiritual and theological. In other words, each society has its own notion of education. To make sense of education—what we learn, what is being regarded as 'legitimate' knowledge, or the way we learn—is to contextualize or situate it in specific time and space.

This ability to contextualize things is being regarded as a sociological perspective. As a matter of fact, when you begin to look at education sociologically, you realize that it cannot be seen in isolation; it is organically related to the social needs of a particular age. What prevails as education cannot be separated from its polity, economy and culture. Let us take two examples. These days in almost all institutions of higher learning *environmental sciences* are taught. A major reason is that in complex/industrial societies environment has become a matter of great concern, and it is important to strive for the kind of knowledge that makes sense of the growing environmental crisis, and arouses ecological sensitivity to resolve it. Likewise, as women's movements are gaining more and more legitimacy, universities are restructuring their curriculum, and accepting *gender studies* as a fundamental branch of knowledge.

It is, therefore, not difficult for you to appreciate that education is integrally related to our collective concerns. These collective concerns manifest themselves as politico-economic ideas. It is interesting to explore the relationship between education and politico-economic ideas. At this juncture, you can also notice that every dynamic society lives within many such ideas and aspirations. If you look at your own society, you would find that there are, for instance, Gandhians, Marxists and Dalit activists, and each group has its own constituency. And depending on the kind of society they seek to create they have their own agenda of education. These different socio-economic projects,

be it Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism, are often regarded as ideologies. With your sociological imagination it is not difficult for you to understand that education or curriculum is inseparable from these ideologies. That is why, every dynamic society has been perpetually debating an education. It is, in fact, a site of contestation.

13.2 OBJECTIVES

After working through this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning of ideology, and why social scientists give importance to it;
- Relate ideology to the study of curriculum;
- Make sense of the social reality of post-Independent India, particularly its diverse and conflicting ideologies;
- Situate the entire debate on ideology and curriculum in the context of these ideologies; and
- Appreciate the importance of your own role as a constructive critic to evolve an integral curriculum.

13.3 MAKING SENSE OF IDEOLOGY

As we intend to explore the relationship between ideology and curriculum, it is important to conceptualize ideology. It is true that in your everyday conversation you often use this word. You tend to equate ideology with a set of beliefs, attitudes and aspirations that a person or a social group cherishes. You also use the word to describe political beliefs—say, Gandhism, Marxism, liberalism etc. In social sciences—or in serious scholarly pursuits—you, however, need to be careful while using this word. In fact, sociologists have been debating on the meaning of ideology for quite some time. From this fairly long history of this debate we would choose three major trends.

13.3.1 Ideology as a Perspective

Karl Mannheim who developed and enriched 'sociology of knowledge' as a sub-discipline made a remarkable contribution to the understanding of ideology. For Mannheim, 'there are modes of thought which cannot be adequately understood as long as their social origins are obscured'. In other words, sociology of knowledge concentrates on the 'social and existential determination of thought'. We do not think in isolation. We think as a social group. What we think—or the way we perceive the world—depends on our group experiences: the life we lead, the struggles we engage in, the interests we seek to retain, and the hopes we cherish. Each social group (and this group, Mannheim emphasized, need not necessarily be based on economic class, it may rest on caste, racial, gender, ethnic or religious identities) has its own mode of thinking; each social group is looking at the world from a particular vantage point. To put it otherwise, each social group has a 'perspective' or a 'worldview' which, according to Mannheim, can be regarded as a '*total ideology*' of the group. As a total ideology, it is rooted in concrete socio-historical experiences; it need not be confused with the 'psychological motive' of a particular individual. For example, when we say that capitalists have an ideology we are not talking about what capitalists as individuals are thinking. Instead, we are interested in knowing how capitalists as a class, because of their engagement in a concrete socio-historical setting, are looking at the world.

According to Mannheim, a distinction can be made between ideology and utopia. For example, the ruling group has a vested interest in preserving the existing order. Its ideology retains the status-quo; it is conformist in nature. But the emergent group seeks to overthrow the system; its thinking is revolutionary. Mannheim regarded it as utopia.

What is, however, interesting to note is that, be it ideology or utopia, Mannheim did not regard it as necessarily false or erroneous. Instead, he regarded it as a kind of '*relational knowledge*'. Yes, it does represent the reality. But this representation is partial and incomplete because it is related to the specific experiences of a specific social group at a specific juncture of history.

Even Marxism, Mannheim argued, is no exception. It may be noted that Marxism seeks to distinguish itself as an 'objective science' which, as it is claimed, is different from, say, 'bourgeois ideology'. As it is argued, ideology is false, whereas Marxism is true. But, for Mannheim, Marxism too is an ideology, a perspective; it is also a kind of relational knowledge. There is no reason to give special cognitive privilege to Marxism.

These conflicting ideologics/perspectives—particularly when no ideology has special legitimacy—lead to the 'elemental perplexity of our time'. Yet, Mannheim retained hope, strove for the 'free-floating intelligentsia' who, he imagined, would be able to free themselves from their class interests, engage in perpetual 'assimilation and transcendence of the limitations of particular points of view', and arrive at the 'broadest possible extension of our horizon of vision'.

13.3.2 Ideology as 'False Consciousness'

Perhaps the Marxian understanding of ideology is most well-known. This requires an understanding of what Marx and Engels regarded as the 'materialist conception of history' (Marx and Engels, 1976). The fundamental premise of the materialist conception of history is that men must be in a position to make history, and for that they need to fulfill the basic needs of eating, drinking, clothing and shelter. In fact, 'the first historical act is the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself'. This led Marx and Engels to argue that 'the production of ideas is directly interwoven with the material activity of men'. What we are depends on what we produce and how we produce. In other words, morality, religion, metaphysics and all the rest of ideology no longer retain semblance of independence; they depend on the *mode of production*: the forces and relations of production. No wonder, 'the handmill gives us a society with the feudal landlord, and the steam engine with an industrial capitalist'. For Marx and Engels, 'it is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness'.

Another interesting fact about the Marxism conception of ideology needs to be understood. Ideology, in the Marxian sense, need not be equated with all ideas. Essentially, what gives its distinctive identity is that it serves the interests of the ruling class. Although it projects itself as objective and value-neutral, the fact is that, as the Marxists would argue, it *falsifies* and *hides* the reality for preserving the interests of the ruling class. Whereas the ruling class sees its ideology as a desirable proposition for the entire society, the Marxists debunk it as 'false consciousness', and contrast it with the science emanating from their dialectical/historical materialism. In other words, as it is argued, for real emancipation the working class does not need bourgeois ideology, but *true consciousness* of the actual contradictions of the capitalist society as illuminated by the Marxian science.

Let us take an example. The idea of 'individual equality' is cherished in a capitalist society. Yes, on the surface, the worker is free to enter into any agreement with an employer which is suited to his or her own interest. But the real fact is that this ideology of freedom falsifies the reality and hides its contradictions. The reason is that workers, far from being free, are forced to sell their labour power if they want to survive precisely because they have been deprived of their means of production. In other words, the ideology of individual equality in a capitalist society, as the Marxists argue, is merely an illusion.

According to the Marxian argument, this *illusory character* of ideology cannot be overcome only by science. True, science, contributes to the 'theoretical collapse of ideology' but cannot by itself bring about its collapse in practice. Liberation is, after all, a historical and not a mental act. Real objective conditions are, therefore, necessary. Ideology can be overcome by practically changing the contradictory relations that give rise to it.

13.3.3 Ideology and Hegemony

Another important thinker who enriched our understanding of ideology was *Antonio Gramsci*—an Italian Marxist who was creatively engaged with the theory of revolution in advanced capitalist societies (Gramsci 1971). What is important to note is that Gramsci was not contented with the 'negative' conception of ideology, because, for him, ideology is precisely 'the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc'. Moreover, ideology is also the terrain on which the ruling class achieves hegemony. As a matter of fact, according to Gramsci, in advanced capitalist societies the ruling class rules not simply through coercion, force or violence. Instead, it succeeds in gaining legitimacy by acquiring *consent* even from the oppressed/marginalized classes. In other words, the ruling class *hegemony* is established by creating a shared ideology. No wonder, the hegemonic ideology manifests itself in the form of 'solidity of popular beliefs' which seems to have the 'same energy as a material force'. In other words, far from seeing ideology as just 'negative' or 'illusory', Gramsci gave great importance to it. He regarded this non-reductionist relationship between ideologies and material forces as *historical block*. In the process of consolidating the ideological hegemony of the ruling class, argued Gramsci, *civil society*—mass media, educational/cultural institutions—plays a key role. Another important fact *about* the Gramscian understanding of hegemony needs to be understood. It is true that the ruling class cannot jeopardize its economic interests. Yet, it cannot become a hegemonic class, and gain the consent of others unless it is engaged in some amount of 'economic and corporate sacrifice'. Hegemony presupposes that one takes into account the interests of the groups over which hegemony will be exercised. A striking illustration is, of course, the ideological practice of popular democracy through which the capitalist class seeks to establish its hegemony. Popular democracy certainly means that the capitalist class—at least, to a certain extent—incorporates the interests of the masses, because everyone has a voting power, and even the marginalized classes' can constitute a pressure group and make their presence felt in the decision-making process. For Gramsci, in advanced capitalist countries where civil society is fairly strong and ideological hegemony is sustainable, revolution requires a new strategy. In fact, it requires a struggle in the domain of ideology; it demands an alternative hegemony to be established by the working class. It is, therefore, vital for the working class not to isolate itself within a ghetto of proletarian purism. On the contrary, it must try to create a genuinely 'national popular will' by representing the interests of the increasingly numerous social groups. Gramsci regarded this revolutionary strategy as 'war of position'. In fact, this alternative hegemony requires an active role of the 'organic intellectuals' of the working class. In other words, ideology remains an important terrain on which these intellectuals have to play an extraordinarily creative role.

13.3.4 Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Ideology

Yes, you can now see that social sciences have been enriched by this intense debate on ideology—its nature and formation, its circulation and hegemony. Although there is a difference of opinion among social scientists, it is not altogether impossible to have a comprehensive understanding of ideology on which we can have a reasonable amount of consensus.

- Ideology is a perspective or a worldview reflecting the nature of society a specific social group seeks to create: its polity, economy, culture, and network of relationships.

- Ideology is essentially *sociological*, not psychological. In other words, ideology is not about one's personal likes and dislikes. Instead, it is a well-articulated worldview of a specific social group at a certain juncture of history. It is in this sense that one can say that Brahminism or Gandhism or Marxism is an ideology.
- Ideology is not necessarily false or erroneous. As a perspective, it may be partial, incomplete or fragmented. It is, therefore, not proper to distinguish 'objective' science from 'subjective' ideology. In fact, science itself can be seen as an ideology of some kind. It is better to see ideology as a representation of the world, may be an incomplete and inadequate representation.
- A dynamic society is one having multiple ideologies. Far from being static and homogeneous, a dynamic society is an arena of conflict. This conflict manifests itself in the form of ideological struggles. If we look at our own society we see divergent and conflicting ideologies: Gandhism, Ambedkarism, Marxism and liberal individualism.
- Not all ideologies have, however, the equal power to establish their supremacy or hegemony. It is more likely that the dominant/privileged classes are more successful—particularly because of their control over mass media and educational institutions—in giving a 'universal' character to their ideology. Yet, it should not be forgotten that history is in continual flux, and even marginalized ideologies assert themselves, and resist the dominant ideology. Society evolves because of this conflict.

Check Your Progress

- 1) Why do social sciences give importance to ideology?

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- 2) What is hegemony? Identify the relationship between education and hegemony.

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13.4 IDEOLOGY SHAPING CURRICULUM

You can now understand why education plays a key role in the process of transmission and communication of ideologies. It would not be wrong to say that in modern times we are living in a *schooled society*. Because it is at school that the child learns many important lessons of life; it is a leading source of socialization. No wonder, learning material, school texts, modes of teaching and evaluation—in fact, the entire curriculum—acquire tremendous relevance. One's worldview depends, at least to a certain extent, on what one learns at school, and how one learns. It is believed that the school curriculum is a major carrier of ideological messages.

You can take some striking illustrations to see the relationship between ideology and curriculum. To begin with, let us take the most important or visible aspect of the curriculum—the contents of knowledge as defined through multiple disciplines like mathematics, geography, physics, history and literature. Mathematics, for instance, is often being seen as an abstract/value-neutral science of numbers. But then, a careful

analysis would suggest that in a patriarchal/capitalist society school mathematics is not entirely free from ideological biases. It often legitimizes *gender stereotypes*: men as *active doers* (traders, businessmen etc) in the public space vs. women as *passive consumers* (buying vegetable, milk etc). Again, while introducing concepts like 'percentage', it depicts essentially a *mercantile world* of profit and loss. Seldom is mathematics used for other meaningful social purposes (for instance, the *philosophy of sharing* can be introduced while the child learns concepts like 'division' and 'fraction'). Likewise, school history, as critics point out, is not particularly known to be sensitive to the history of marginalized communities, tribal and women.

Apart from this manifest curriculum, there is also the *hidden curriculum* filled with ideological messages. Let us, for instance, look at the hidden curriculum manifesting itself through some of the 'taken-for-granted' school rituals and practices like teacher centric pedagogy, examinations etc. Even today the teacher-taught relationship, as Paulo Freire would have argued, remains hierarchical (Freire, 1972). The child is seen as a passive receiver of knowledge; he/she is not an active participant arguing, questioning, contesting and evolving with the teacher. Likewise, examinations objectify children and hierarchize them; other 'disciplinary' activities (school uniform, 'right posture' in the classroom, regular assembly, strict division of time according to the 'time table') tend to create a *docile body and mind*. The result is that, as critics argue, through schooling the child grows up as a 'conformist', a 'loyal' citizen who accepts the status quo, and is deprived of spontaneity and the language of dissent. In other words, this *hidden agenda* needs to be known. Schools, far from being neutral, serve the interests of the Establishment!

13.4.1 Debunking 'Neutrality' of Schooling

In fact, it is through this criticality that in recent times sociologists of education have raised crucial questions relating to ideology and curriculum. They challenge the *conventional/functionalist* argument (which asserts that schools restore moral order, and contribute to the growth of a cohesive society), and point out that schools, far from being neutral, are serving an ideological function. A look at the contributions of *Michael Apple* and *Pierre Bourdieu* would make this point clear.

Apple who has worked on American schooling argues that school knowledge/curriculum is primarily ideological in nature; it needs to be problematized. For Apple, the corporate capitalist economy does have a visible impact on school curriculum. For example, certain branches of knowledge like mathematics and science are regarded as '*high status*' knowledge. They are perceived as superior to arts, literature and humanities. Apple argues that '*high status*', knowledge is discrete, technical and instrumental; the processing and hierarchization of people becomes easier through these knowledge systems. Moreover, '*high status* knowledge is '*macro economically beneficial in terms of long run benefits to the most powerful classes in society*'.

Apple also points out that school texts hide conflict, and portray a consensual orientation to society. For example, schools teach a '*consensus theory of science*' as bodies of knowledge organized around certain fundamental regularities; seldom are the learners taught the history of science, how it evolves and grows through conflict, its relationship with politics and culture. Likewise, in social sciences, Apple finds, the function of conflict is denied; conflict is seen as an aberration, a '*law and order*' problem. Society is being projected as a harmonious whole. In other words, for Apple, schools seek to develop a '*technical*' perspective that takes things for granted. Schools are not interested in creating critical/reflexive awareness.

Pierre Bourdieu—yet another leading sociologist of education—speaks of *reproduction*: the way educational institutions reproduce the existing inequality. Bourdieu draws insight from the French education system. His central argument is that in a class-divided society

schools privilege the 'cultural capital' of the dominant classes. In fact, the children of the dominant classes—through family socialization—acquire this cultural capital. It can be equated with the 'linguistic and social competencies and such qualities as style, manners, know-how as well as aspirations and perceptions of the objective chances of success. Its manifestation can be seen in acquired interests such as listening to classical music, visiting art galleries, reading non-professional books etc. As educational institutions privilege this cultural capital, there is a tendency that the children of the dominant classes excel, and the children of the working class fail. For example, in France, as Bourdieu reminds us, there are two forms of language: bourgeois parlance and common parlance. A major characteristic of bourgeois parlance is that it verbalizes feelings and judgments. But common parlance is devoid of 'fine words'. Now university French is closer to bourgeois parlance. The literate tradition in education assumes that all experiences can be turned into a literary exercise where styles and forms of expression are important. Not surprisingly, in the domain of higher education in France the upper classes dominate.

As educational institutions propagate the cultural symbols/values of the dominant classes, some kind of 'symbolic violence' is being perpetuated on the children of the oppressed classes. For example, it can be argued that schools in India propagate the superiority of mental cognition to manual labour; schools give importance to textual knowledge rather than local/folk traditions. The result is that it becomes exceedingly difficult, particularly for the Dalit/peasant/tribal children, to correlate school knowledge with out of school knowledge; School knowledge seems to be an imposition from above. No wonder, they tend to drop out and fail.

This critical exploration of the relationship between ideology and curriculum seems to have inspired many sociologists of education in India. They have come forward with revealing studies that question the dominant pattern of schooling and curriculum. And, patriarchy at a time when Indian society has been witnessing severe ideological conflicts, these studies have acquired added relevance. Because of these studies we are now raising many interesting questions: whether the history that our children learn does talk about the history of the subaltern communities like the Dalits and tribals, whether the science curriculum is problem-posing, or merely an instrument to get an entry into the lucrative techno-corporate empire, or whether an alternative form of schooling can be evolved to resist a caste ridden/hierarchical/exploitative society.

Check Your Progress

- 1) Why is Michael Apple important for an understanding of ideology and curriculum?

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- 2) Why do you think that the study of ideology and curriculum has acquired special relevance in Indian society?

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13.5 IDEOLOGY AND CURRICULUM IN POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

It is important to situate this entire conceptual/theoretical reflection in the context of our own society. In order to give a concrete direction/focus to our discussion, we would concentrate on four major ideological currents in *post Independent India*, and discuss briefly how these ideologies have been shaping the on-going debate on ideology and curriculum.

13.5.1 Education for Secular Modernity

You would agree that a leading ideology of post Independent India can be characterized as the *Nehruvian agenda of nation making*. As a devoted freedom fighter and the first Prime Minister of our country, Jawaharlal Nehru cherished a great vision: a vision of *modern, industrially-developed, secular, egalitarian nation*. As you know, he repeatedly emphasized the need for '*scientific temper*': an analytical/rational way of looking at the world which, he felt, would fight age-old superstitions and prejudices. He wanted science and technology for sustained industrial development of India. He was also influenced by the world-wide socialist movements and experiments. No wonder, he sought to reconcile liberal/parliamentary democracy with a socialist state. Moreover, the trauma of partition or social conflict on the basis of religious identities was a constant reminder. Nehru, therefore, wanted to create new India free from communal holocaust and religious violence. He gave great importance to India's syncretic traditions, and talked about the *secular state*. As a charismatic leader, Nehru represented the aspirations of a new generation of Indians—nationalist bourgeoisie, educated middle class, newly emergent professionals, lower castes and religious minorities, secularists and even leftists. It would not be wrong to say that the legacy of the freedom struggle, Nehru's charisma, the organization of the Indian National Congress—all these factors made this ideology almost hegemonic, at least till late 60s.

The impact of this hegemonic ideology is clearly visible in the domain of education. Nehru was instrumental in creating new center of learning: science laboratories, institutes of technology, modern universities and cultural institutions, all leading to the making of a modern/secular nation. It was because of this agenda of nation-making that school education was also endowed with a new meaning. The *Kothari Commission* (Government of India, 1966), for example, began its recommendations with an inspiring note: 'the destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms'. School education was equated with the agenda of a secular/egalitarian nation, and its techno economic development. In a truly Nehruvian spirit the Commission wrote extensively on school curriculum: the 'problem-posing nature of science so that it can inculcate 'scientific temper' in the child's mind, the history of the freedom struggle, the social meaning of our Constitution, India's syncretic cultural traditions so that the child overcomes 'local, regional and linguistic' identity, and grows up as a true Indian contributing to national development and progress.

Possibly the influence of this ideology could also be seen in the creation of the *NCERT project* which sought to give a pan Indian/nationalist character to school education. No wonder, in its early phase it did succeed in inviting the leading secular/left intelligentsia of the country, and the school texts with which it came forward began to convey the message of *secular modernity*. History, for instance, gave great importance to India's syncretic cultural traditions, the progressive character of the freedom struggle led by the secular Indian National Congress!

13.5.2 Cultural Nationalism and Changing Curriculum

If you look at history you could see the gradual erosion of the Nehruvian consensus since early 70s. There were many complex politico-economic reasons for this. Possibly

the euphoria of the freedom struggle was over; the promises with which the new state initiated its historic journey were not always fulfilled, and the assertion of marginalized castes and regional forces led to an extremely fragmented social reality. It was this void that, as many political sociologists would like to believe, led to the consolidation of a counter ideology of nation making. It can be characterized as an *ideology of cultural nationalism*. It does speak of the need for an integrated/strong nation. But, unlike what the Nehruvians say, it emphasized the role of the *Hindu religious tradition* for the making of the nation. It seeks to construct the golden past filled with religious ideals and values. This pride in the religious tradition has to be sustained, and all corrupting influences emanating from 'alien' religions and cultures need to be fought, and a strong resurgent *Hindu nation* must rest on this cultural tradition. Its 'unitary' mission makes it skeptical to diverse and plural traditions. Religion, for it, is not merely a spiritual quest for salvation. Instead, religion becomes an 'identity', and this identity needs to be asserted by finding its 'enemies'. True, the roots of this ideology as developed by thinkers like Savarkar and Golwalkar could be seen in colonial India. But in recent times it has become almost a *master ideology*. It is sustained by the trading community, 'insecure' forward castes, and the 'disillusioned' middle class. It argues that the Nehruvian ideology is 'western', its 'secular' character negates the role of religion, and hence it is 'anti-traditional'.

An ideology of this kind is bound to have an impact on education and curriculum. For example, it speaks of the need for 'value education'; it wants a curriculum that arouses the learner's faith in his/her cultural/religious tradition. It seeks to revive 'indigenous' knowledge systems like *Vedic mathematics* and *astrology* which, as it is alleged, secular modernists have always tried to undermine. No wonder, it feels the need for rewriting school texts and altering the 'errors' made by secular scholars. This perhaps explains the paradigm shift in the NCERT; old 'Nehruvian' texts are being replaced by a new set of 'culture-sensitive' texts (NCERT, 2000). This intervention in the restructuring of curriculum is often known as '*saffronization of education*' which, it is argued, is increasingly gaining legitimacy because of its close affinity with the political power. There are, however, many critics who argue that this sort of intervention on the curriculum is bound to threaten the ideal of syncretism and pluralism. Furthermore, its inclination to an assertive religious identity, it is feared, is inherently conservative and patriarchal in nature; it is not particularly conducive to the cultivation of a free/enquiring spirit.

It is equally important to note that this plea for religious education is put forward not solely by the majority community; even the *minority religious communities* have their own schools and curriculum which, critics point out, are not really desirable if we wish to create a modern/democratic/egalitarian nation.

13.5.3 Globalization and Marketization of Education

The doctrine of globalization is yet another ideology which is becoming increasingly influential, particularly since 1990s. This ideology implies the principle of *economic liberalization* which means privatization of economic resources, and free entry of transnational corporations. It indicates the steady retreat of the state from the economic domain. In a way, it is like entering into the global market. It propagates itself through new symbols and messages that celebrate the principle of a 'good life' filled with material abundance, technological pleasure and global life style. It sanctifies the market—its ability to unite the world, and construct a *global village*. As sociologists argue, an ideology of this kind is gaining legitimacy because of the new situations that have emerged after the collapse of the erstwhile Soviet Union, and the disillusionment with the socialist system. In India the post-Nehruvian era has also witnessed skepticism towards 'socialistic' principles. Furthermore, the emergences of the new metropolitan middle class, the growing importance of Indian diaspora, and worldwide travel and migration have created a social base for an ideology of this kind to flourish.

The impact of this ideology on knowledge and curriculum is often felt. For example, if you look at the domain of higher learning, you can notice significant changes. These days universities are being increasingly pressurized to manage their own resources, alter their curriculum, and establish linkages with the techno economic empire. It means the entry of the market into the domain of learning. It creates hierarchies: 'market friendly' knowledge systems like *information technology, commerce and management* are becoming more 'legitimate' and 'relevant', and theoretical sciences, liberal arts and humanities are becoming marginalized. Moreover, the role of the teacher as a friend/philosopher/guide is declining; he/she is becoming more like a *technical professional* whose only task, it seems, is to sell *market-friendly* skills to the learner. Even in the domain of school education you can see the influence of this ideology. These days you see the proliferation of *private schools* with 'five star' facilities. Knowledge is becoming more like a commodity one can buy. As critics argue, the impact of global capitalism on education is devastating. It is elitist; it looks at the curriculum merely from an instrumental perspective, and it discourages the idealism of knowledge: search for fundamental ideas, and unconditional commitment to truth, irrespective of its 'salability'.

13.5.4 Protest Ideologies and Emancipatory Curriculum

Apart from these three major ideological trends, there are also alternative perspectives which, far from being dead, have their adherents, and histories of protest. Imagine, for instance, the *subaltern* perspective. As a *protest ideology* it asserts that the nation as it is constructed has not given due importance to those who are in the periphery: Dalits, tribals and women. It is, therefore, important to rediscover their agency, and look at the world through their eyes. In fact, in post Independent India we have noticed significant changes as far as the assertion of these subaltern communities are concerned. Possibly because of democratization and political mobilization the hitherto silent communities are regaining the language of dissent, and slowly but steadily occupying an important space in the socio-political domain. No wonder, this awareness creates subaltern ideologies ranging from Ambedkarism to peasant consciousness.

These ideologies raise new questions relating to knowledge and curriculum. It is argued that the dominant/mainstream pattern of education is elitist; it is Brahminical and patriarchal; it negates the contributions of the subaltern communities (Kumar, 1989). It is, therefore, important to restructure the curriculum and the mode of teaching so that the subaltern communities find their space, and succeed in relating school knowledge to their everyday experiences. As a striking example, we can reflect on the experiments made by *Eklavya*—an educational group situated in Madhya Pradesh. *Eklavya* intervenes in the domain of school education, orients the teaching community, produces school texts that through narratives and real life experiences sensitize the subaltern child, and enable him/her to situate school knowledge in the specific social context in which he/she is growing up (Pathak, 2002).

Apart from these subaltern ideologies, there are alternative perspectives which emerged out of the thinking of visionaries like *Gandhi and Tagore*. Gandhi, you already know, believed in an alternative notion of *swaraj* which, he thought would depend on simplicity and austerity, harmony with nature, decentralization of power, and self-reliant village communities. Gandhi pleaded for '*basic education*' which, as he wanted, would unite theoretical knowledge with *practical/productive experiences*, give dignity to manual labour, and emphasize local/indigenous skills (Gandhi, 1951). Basic education, he felt, would reduce elitism, and bring curriculum nearer to people's life experiences. Likewise, Tagore a poet and a visionary disliked regimented/structured pattern of schooling. He wanted the child to learn by relating to the rhythm of nature, and by cultivating not just cognitive skills, but also sensitivity to *art, music, aesthetics and productive work*. In fact, both Gandhi and Tagore sought to restructure the curriculum, and reduce the bookish element in education. They gave primacy to the integral development of the learner. They wanted a harmonic/egalitarian society having an organic linkage with nature.

Although their ideas were often denied as 'utopian', there are educational activists who continue to experiment, and try to evolve an *integral curriculum*, child-centeredness, non competitive/life supporting milieu, and a spiritual bond between the teacher and the taught.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Do you see a relationship between school curriculum and nation-making project in India?

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- 2) Do you see the relevance of Gandhi in the debate on curriculum?

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13.6 LET'S SUM UP

All these ideological influences, you may be wondering, have made it impossible to arrive at an *objective/scientific/apolitical/non controversial* curriculum. Yes, it is true that a living/dynamic society is one that cannot come to a final conclusion on its educational agenda, because diverse and conflicting interests govern such a society.

But then, you need not forget your own *constructive role* as a student of education. If you feel that a good society is one that is *democratic, egalitarian, gender-sensitive and eco-friendly*, you ought to work for the appropriate curriculum. You should then realize the need for an *integral curriculum* that cultivates all the faculties of learning, and arouses one's enquiring spirit. Such a curriculum, you would appreciate, aims at integrating scientific reasoning with aesthetic imagination, and technical mastery with ecological awareness. It also strives for an *open/transparent/dialogic classroom* that celebrates mutual trust and respect between the teacher and the taught. It thinks of a process of evaluation that, far from declaring one's 'failure' and eliminating people, helps the young learner to discover his/her hidden potential.

Yes, thinking about education becomes truly meaningful when you get inspired to intervene, and work for a life-affirming curriculum.

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UNIT 14 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Structure

- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Objectives
- 14.3 Language as a Social System
- 14.4 Language Acquisition and Development
- 14.5 Language and Early Childhood Education
- 14.6 Language and Thinking
- 14.7 Language Deficit
- 14.8 Language and Discrimination
- 14.9 Language Planning
- 14.10 Let's Sum Up
- 14.11 References and Suggested Readings

14.1 INTRODUCTION

At the center of teaching-learning activities is language. No teaching activity can be performed without the use of language. If you carefully examine, you will notice that language, communication and education are interrelated processes. Language and communication are integral components of educational transaction. To transact the prescribed curriculum the teacher has to devise various activities so that the content can be transferred and then other activities are devised with the help of students so that the content transacted is thoroughly understood by the children. The level of knowledge of the teacher in the language and the mastery in the use of the language is bound to influence the quality of teaching. Teachers try to explain the content of the lessons in their own words first and then take up other activities. In an effort to explain the contents teachers explain or paraphrase the chapters in a number of ways in our own words. To do this well, we need a good vocabulary and understanding of grammar. Sometimes, when teachers lack in vocabulary and grammar our students identify the mistakes and do not hold high opinion of teachers.

14.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- understanding the role of society in language development of children;
- understanding language as a social system; and
- decide on selection of a language for teaching in classroom.

14.3 LANGUAGE AS A SOCIAL SYSTEM

For those who have studied and understood the relevance of language it is not just a medium of communication but the most treasured symbol system of the community, which speaks it. Every single fact of the flora and fauna of the area, beliefs and rituals of the people, facts of historical events and the minutest details of festivals and of the people speaking the language are saved in their language. These facts are not just of academic interest but have important implication on the success and failure of the speakers and so has important bearing on educational planning.

If we look at the curriculum of pre-primary and primary classes it will be apparent that the emphasis is on developing language in children so that they can independently read and understand the texts prescribed in the curriculum or as independent reading. It is important to mention that normally we believe that like all other subjects prescribed in the school curriculum, language is yet another subject; which is a misunderstanding. Language is a skill, which provides the tool to negotiate all other texts. •To be precise, children can read and learn textbooks of all other subjects only after they have learnt the language in which textbooks are written. Children who succeed in acquiring better linguistic skills are able to decipher the message from all other texts better than those whose language skills in the medium of instruction and textbooks are not so well developed.

14.4 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Children start naming objects and defining concepts around them ever since their birth. By the time they come to school they have a fairly developed language. Through language children understand both the objects and the concepts or ideas. We know through research that children could speak quite a lot when asked to explain concepts like mother land, honesty, sacrifice but when equivalent words in different contexts appeared in the text books they offered different explanations. We take the expression used for new entrants as '*clean state*' literally when we admit children to pre-primary or primary classes. They are not quite ignorant. It needs to be realized that by the age of 3 or 5 years when children go to Kindergarten or class I they would have spent 13,000 to 22,000 hours either listening to other speakers or radio/TV broadcasts or interacting with others. This process becomes very rewarding if children have grandparents or elders at home who can tell stories or answer their queries about the objects and the processes they see around. Some children at the age of five or even before can construct beautiful stories with imaginary characters or present commentaries on things and events around them.

14.5 LANGUAGE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Having discussed the importance of mother tongue in communication and the role of language in education, let us discuss the use of minor languages for pre-primary and primary education. As mentioned above major time and emphasis in the first few years of schooling is devoted to developing language skills but we ignore the fact that the child has already been provided thousands of hours of language lessons by the mother, father, grand parents, siblings peers and so on before coming to the school.

One of the objectives of education is to bring the best out of children through the process of education. Every child is born with certain individual features and if these features are identified and properly nurtured the child will grow without tension and perform one's best. It is human nature to always tell others and not hear them. Our teachers also do the same with the children. Normally teachers devote no more than 5 to 10 percent of the time to hearing the children's ideas, ambitions, desires so that they can be put to assignments which interest them and more than that give them an opportunity to show their best. From the first day of the child in school, teachers start lecturing and enforcing their views, that too in a language which children have little competence. Our classrooms are brilliant examples of one-way communication; monologues. However, educationists have oft repeated – education is a process of dialogue. Howsoever young the learner, the process of education should be maximum dialogue and discussion so that teachers are aware of the cognition children have developed and accordingly build their world-view. This cannot happen if teachers constantly keep talking in a language other than the mother tongue.

As most of the times in India we teach children in a language other than their mother tongue we not only fail to utilize the language they have acquired since their birth but also place a new world depicted in the books to be comprehended and then reproduced in their oral or written discourses. Children are doubly deprived – one by not making use of the mother tongue and second by asking them to construct a world (described in text books) which is not their own. Children's first few years in school are devoted to the understanding of the language (and through it the socio-cultural understanding) they have learnt since their birth. The only logical thing can be to teach children in their first language whether it is one of the languages of the VIIIth Schedule of our Constitution or not. We will have to take up teaching in the mother tongue and develop capability of all languages to be used as language of instruction we want all citizens equal opportunity to compete. It is at present an unequal competition.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) How should children be taught in early years?

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- 2) Which language should be used for teaching to young children?

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14.6 LANGUAGE AND THINKING

Has it ever occurred to you that our language might be influencing our thought process? This question becomes important because we need to organize our lectures and we organize our learners in a particular language. If language influences our thought then perhaps we need to take care of our language. From the sections above you must have understood that there is a very strong relationship between language, society and individual upbringing or exposure to different languages. American linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf have worked extensively on this area and it is known as Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This will help us understand our teaching in relation to our language.

We will try to understand the concept through an example. Languages have words to express the actions (or activities), objects and customs where the language is being used. If an object or custom does not exist in a particular area, the language being used may not have words for such things. For example Inuit has many words to express the state of snow because Eskimos live in snow-covered areas all through the year. Languages spoken in other areas may have just a couple of words for snow. *Cambridge Learners Dictionary* has only a couple of related words for snow and a few related words for ice. If an English speaker lands in Arctic region of Siberia she/he would divide the various states of snow through these few words. Similarly for a Hindi speaker from Rajasthan may have a number of words for hot weather but an English speaker may have only a couple of words in English to express all the various states of hot weather. Don't you think English language has not only influenced the thinking of the English speaker but also in some sense predetermined the thinking process.

You would have made out that one language may have various expressions for a particular concept but the same concept may not be differentiated from another concept for which

there may be another word. However, when we learn a different language we need to consciously develop vocabulary for the purposes we would be using the language. Our students from families not using a standard form of language or a different language may face such handicaps in the classroom communication. Similarly, we the teachers may also be handicapped by our mother tongue.

14.7 LANGUAGE DEFICIT

In the last two or three decades the importance of education has been highlighted. It has been emphasized that education is important not only for individual growth but as an indispensable tool for development. Throughout the world efforts in reaching education to all has been emphasized. We find that a number of initiatives have been taken in the developed countries since the World War-II and in the developing world since the Jomtien Conference on 'Education for All' held in 1990. Most of these efforts begin with primary education either for children or adults, and that too language teaching. Language is the primary tool to access knowledge and information. You may also be involved in some of these literacy programs. Besides, if your students come from rural background you would be able to understand this phenomenon very easily.

Basil Bernstein, a British Sociologist and teacher studied the role of language in relation to social class and education. In the post-war period there developed an understanding in Britain that individual ability and not class should be the basis of education. Bernstein studied the role of language in educational achievement of participants from different backgrounds. Through his research Bernstein concluded that learners from less-privileged sections also use a form of language, which is not very developed. He named their language as *restricted code* whereas learners from well off sections use a more developed form of language. He named their language *elaborated code*. In formal schools the language used for teaching and examination is the elaborated code. You would realize that the language of learners from well off families is the same as that of the school. They do not have to make much efforts to develop the language used in the classroom and also examination whereas learners from less privileged families have to make double efforts. Less privileged children use a standard form of language in the classroom whereas a dialect or less developed (from the perspective of education) form of language at home. They have to make much more effort to maintain good proficiency in the language used for education. The phenomenon can be understood through an experiment that was conducted earlier. Speech of some children from a school in Delhi and a school in Chennai were recorded and played to trainee teachers. After hearing the speech, the teachers were asked to describe the speakers. The teachers were totally wrong. The speakers they identified as North Indian, Hindi speakers upper middle class were children from South India, studying in a well reputed Delhi school and the children they identified as South India were North Indian children studying in a school in Chennai.

Two things are clear from the experiment that our place of living and education gives us our linguistic identity and that we are identified and sometimes get credit or discredit because of our social identity rather than actual qualities because of the perceivers biases. In brief, we wish to explain that as teachers we must try and overcome such biases.

This phenomenon is known as 'deficit theory'. There has been criticism of this theory but it has great strengths. You would be able to differentiate between learners and adopt different strategies for various learners in your class. Besides, understanding of this phenomenon would help us understand our own linguistic capabilities and handicaps and overcome those weaknesses.

Check Your Progress 2

- 3) Identify children with different mother tongues and ask them to read a passage of English. Identify the difference in pronunciation of various sounds, of children from different language backgrounds.

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- 4) Identify children from different language backgrounds and ask them to write a passage on a given topic and identify the variation in vocabulary of children from different linguistic, social and cultural backgrounds.

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14.8 LANGUAGE AND DISCRIMINATION

India like a number of Asian and African countries is linguistic goldmine. A large number of languages are spoken and also creative pieces are produced. There are also a large number of languages which have rich oral literature but in the absence of a script they do not have literature in print. The fact remains that all languages as far as a system is concerned are equal but their speakers are not equal when it comes to getting privileges. Some language speakers are more privileged than others.

It is often mentioned that language is key to success in education. Various researches also prove that learners with better competence in language get better placed in academic ranking as well as get better placement and also rise faster in professional life. It is important to study and/ report which are the crucial factors that lead to better language competence.

In bilingual and multilingual settings, the dynamics of language acquisition are quite different from monolingual situations. Children who speak, at home, a language other than the language of classroom communication are often found to lag behind in academic achievement. To put in other words children who speak the same language at home in which they are taught are often found to be in a privileged position and very often fair better in academics. We need to study once again how a level playing field can be created for different groups. As this has been realized and mentioned for quite some time we have made various experiments with varied results which need to be reported and replicated.

14.9 LANGUAGE PLANNING

Every nation plans its language development, besides other methods through curriculum planning. In India school based language planning is done through the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) developed every ten years. The most recent NCF of India was published in the year 2005. Text books for a few classes have already been developed. Another very important related issue is of training of teachers in language. Whenever training of teachers is considered, the group that gets the attention is of language teachers and more often primary school language teachers. We talk of language across curriculum but rarely consider training teachers of other subjects in language. Language development in children cannot and should not be considered the responsibility of language teachers only. We would be happy to consider research papers on any aspect of language planning in general and especially language planning and teacher education for school education. Comparative studies and empirical studies would be of special interest and would be welcome.

Another major issue in education is of providing education to children/speakers of non-scheduled and tribal languages. Perhaps no more than fifty per cent of the elementary school age children speak the Scheduled languages. In spite of the best efforts we have only been able to develop material in the Scheduled languages. It may be concluded that we as a nation have predetermined half our children to fail. Alternatives need to be thought. Isolated private initiatives have been made. We would like to invite ideas to undo this imbalance and also reports of experiments made in India or abroad. The Government has also proposed providing education in tribal languages during the XI Plan.

There also exist situations where languages with large number of speakers and a long tradition of literature exist but are not included in the list of Scheduled languages or language of education, like Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri (spoken in Bihar) because a sister language, in this case Hindi, has obtained a privileged position. Languages are mutually intelligible but the pull of the mother tongue phenomenon put speakers of these languages in a deficient position because the speakers of Received Pronunciation (RP) of Hindi would not consider the Hindi of Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri speakers of acceptable standard. This is not the only case but similar other situations exist. We also need to report them and also suggest measures.

These are some of the views which may lead to linguistic deprivation for some and privileges for others.

14.10 LET'S SUM UP

Even though language appears to be just a tool of communication but in the sphere of teaching-learning it plays a crucial role. In educational communication the participants are put on a scale of most successful to least successful so it is a question of their lives. The chances of success or failure, is in a way pre-decided as soon as the language of instruction is selected. Some learners are automatically favoured by the choice of one language over the other, and similarly some are discriminated against by the same choice.

Every language provides to its speakers a set of 'codes' which are developed in a particular context of the society and the group which speaks that language. It must be clear that languages develop a vocabulary for the purposes they are used. Some languages are not used for teaching-learning purposes so they do not possess the vocabulary required to be used as medium of communication in classrooms. Even though this is a practical problem in choosing a language as medium of instruction but learners are nowhere responsible for this handicap of the language they may be using.

Most of the times in selecting a language for classroom interaction usefulness and popularity of the language are taken into consideration which may be practical but this decision has its implications on the learners. It is expected that after going through this unit you would have understood the relation between medium of instruction in classroom, chances of success or failure of students and similar other issue.

14.11 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 15 MASS MEDIA AND EDUCATION

Structure

- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 Objectives
- 15.3 What is Mass Media
- 15.4 Mass Media and Education
- 15.5 Traditional Education and its Limitations
- 15.6 Experiments with Mass Media in Indian Education
 - 15.6.1 Television Support to Education in India
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 - 15.6.5 Television for Education — The Post SITE Scenario
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- 15.12 References and Suggested Readings

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Education evolved from the social compulsions. Every society has its compulsions and these compulsions drive the society to learn more in order to solve their compulsions. These learning lead to social education. Over a period of time the treasure of learning necessitates to have these learning integrating it into structured education system, may be non-formal or formal. Today, the level of education and use of educational technology are important parameters of development for any society. All over the world, changing technologies and economic reforms are creating dramatic shifts in three key priorities for education:

- it must be accessible for all;
- it must support the continued expansion of knowledge; and
- it must meet growing demands by the market place for adaptable workers who can readily acquire new skills.

Various Indian Educational Surveys show existing gaps between school education in rural areas and in slum areas of cities and urban areas in terms of attendance, retention, learning achievements and drop out rates. The rural educational institutions always have poor attendance, poor retention, low learning and high dropouts. In this changing facade of educational needs, there is growing recognition about the critical role of education and mass media and other communication technologies such as Internet and communication satellite.

Module has been limited to radio, television and computer. It has not discussed print media. Materials on use of radio for education in India is very limited, hence, there is a tilt towards television. Readers may have different views on computer and internet being interactive Mass media for this media but here the authors have included and justified it as mass media

15.2 OBJECTIVES

In the above context, mass media has been proven as a biggest technological support. The present unit is written keeping this in mind with following objectives:

- to describe the education system in Indian and the use of mass media¹ in education in its historical perspective;
- to discuss the strength and limitation of the mass media as a means of education at different levels; and
- to consider implications and possibilities of use of mass media for education.

15.3 WHAT IS MASS MEDIA

There exists no single clear cut and simple definition of Mass Media. This is largely because of the continuing explosion of digital information communication technologies (ICT). It includes newspapers and magazines, radio and television programme services, electronic publications, teletext and other all edited programmes published daily/periodically through the transmission of written materials and vocal materials readily available to the general public.

Scholars however do agree that the term 'Mass Media' incorporates the tools used in the storage, transmission, and delivery of information or data. Others however, use the "Mass Media" to refer to that part of the media which is formulated and designed to reach a very large audience such as the entire population of a given region.

It need to be noted that this term "mass media" does not cover bulletins, catalogues, and all those forms of publications meant exclusively for advertising, business communication, educational processes or the Internal work of companies, institutions and foundations, societies, political parties, church/temple/masjid (etc.) and other organizations, school gazettes, the Official Gazettes, other official publications, posters, pamphlets, brochures and transparencies, and video pages without moving pictures (unpaid reports), unless stipulated otherwise by law!

It has also been used to mean the sum of the public mass distributors of news and entertainment across media that includes newspapers, television, radio, broadcasting and text publishers.

Mass Media has been deeply influenced by a revolution in telecommunications which has greatly altered communication by providing new media for long distance communication. It is for this reason that others look at it as 'any medium used to transmit mass communication'.

15.4 MASS MEDIA AND EDUCATION

With the advent of mass media, the education system started developing high hopes. Mass media offer equal access to education. They do not only disseminate knowledge where no other means are available but also supplement formal and non-formal instruction. They fascinate the student and provide them with considerable information outside the classroom. Educational programmes on mass media are meant to provide a unique classroom covering a vast area for education of high quality. They help overcome practical problems in school, like shortage of laboratory equipment, libraries and trained teachers. They can respond vigorously to changes in curriculum and can educational materials that are introduce but not available in textbooks.

Bates (1977) writes that television was used in the country like Australia, Canada, Korea, New Guinea, Sweden, UK, and USA and it was found helpful in shaping children's attitude and it can benefit children directly rather to harm them with it. Sinha (1985), found that the comprehension was poor among the young children, particular science programmes. Non-commercial broadcasting is of two types:

- Community education television, and
- Television supplementing formal education and non-formal academic education.

The specific term used to describe the second type is 'instructional television'. Non-formal academic education refers to courses of study, which have a prescribed syllabus and written examination just as in formal education but do not have regular classroom interaction. It includes correspondence education and open university courses. It extends the school or college curriculum through non-formal systems. Distance education is a form of non-formal education. The term distance education is synonymous with distance learning, tele-teaching, and distance teaching.

Check Your Progress 1

1) What is basic education?

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2) What are the types of education?

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15.5 TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND ITS LIMITATIONS

The present day education could not accommodate every one in formal system. Only a few specialized centers of education for a large number of spirants made the task more difficult. However, the situation is changing. Introduction of efficient postal system gave birth to text-based correspondence courses. For a long time, this has been the primary means for delivering distance education, both in industrialized and in developing countries. The concept of distance education programs offered a promising way to meet the educational needs of millions of children and adults, especially in developing

countries where expertise and physical and financial resources are limited and the bulk of the population lives and works in rural or remote areas.

Since education has been, till recently, the responsibility of State, the cost aspect had never been thought about. Increasingly, the State finds it difficult to fully support specialized education. Resource crunch has also affected the quality of education. This has resulted into privatization of education and a mounting pressure on the educational institutions to earn for themselves.

Institutionalised education system has posed a question to the educational planner – How to reach to all those seeking education or to those whom the State intends to make educated. Traditional means of education are neither fully equipped nor adequate to meet the needs of large population, spread different geographic terrains. In developing countries, education for all, at least a primary level of education looks like an unrealistic dream unless the conventional strategies are changed and newer technologies are pressed into service.

Check Your Progress 2

- 3) What are the limitations of traditional education system?

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- 4) Why mass media was introduced in education system?

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15.6 EXPERIMENTS WITH MASS MEDIA IN INDIAN EDUCATION

15.6.1 Television Support to Education in India

Radio broadcasting existed in India since late 1920, upon which arrived television in 1959. But it was only satellite link that provided boost to the television expansion - signal to any place, irrespective of distance and geographic terrain. Indian visionaries thought of using satellite communication to multiply information and was considered a most important and convenient tool for accelerating the process of education in India.

15.6.2 Induction of Television in Schools

Since the philosophy of Doordarshan includes creation of a 'Learning society' through formal and informal education programmes, Doordarshan, a part of the then All India Radio introduced School TV Programmes in some schools of Delhi. The Delhi School Television Project was designed by the Delhi Educational Television Centre and began its broadcasting in October 1961 with cooperation from the Ford Foundation, USA and the Education Department of the Delhi Administration. Initially 250 television sets were installed in various schools or canters in and around Delhi. Three 20-minute programmes were broadcast each morning five days a week and repeated in the afternoon for the benefit of the second shift.

This marked the beginning of television support to educational system in India. Although at miniscule level, this project was considered a success. It encouraged the educational

planners. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) took lead in this direction and Doordarshan joined hands with ISRO.

15.6.3 Satellite Television for School Education

The next large-scale television support to education was during Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE)¹.

As apart of SITE, the special attention was given to the school children in the age group of 5-12. ISRO and Doordarshan produced 22½ minutes programmes that were transmitted during school hours (10.00 to 11.30 hours) from Monday to Saturday. Since there were four language states covered under SITE, children of a specific language state got to see programme in their respective language (Hindi, Oriya, Telugu and Kannada).

The objectives of the SITE Science Education Programmes were to make children realise that science is everywhere; that their immediate environment can be questioned, understood, explained and manipulated by them using the scientific

method. The programmes the learning of the scientific method, more than mere transfers of information. The programme helped in increasing the information and knowledge of science among the school children and the children acquired an attitude of inquiry. The programme also helped in enhancing the general awareness and understanding of children in the areas of Physical, Intellectual, Social, Emotional, Community, Cultural and Environmental Development. Sinha (1985) observed that a few students learned to draw the sketches shown on the TV. They picked up the words like *Namaste* (A word of greeting), *Prathamik Siksha* (Primary Education), and *Samapt* (The end).

15.6.4 Science Teachers' Training as Part of SITE

It was a general realization among the planners of SITE as well as those in the decision making of the educational policy in India that the teachers should be trained to integrate television into classroom teaching.

As a part of SITE, a multi-media package of training of primary school teachers in science was developed to orient a very large number of teachers located at different parts of the country. As a first step 24,000 teachers were trained in October 1975. From villages surrounding the SITE village 10 teachers were selected and sent to each of 2400 SITE villages. Three other series of training courses were held in the summer of 1976 wherein teachers from other neighbouring areas of the SITE villages also participated. The multi-media package covered pedagogic, motivational and enrichment aspects. The components of multimedia package were television programmes, radio programmes, activities, and enrichment material and teacher monitor tutorials. This indicated "multiplier" effect and very significant contribution to primary education.

The objectives of the training programme was to familiarise the teacher with the pedagogy associated with the Science Education Programme and to upgrade teacher's knowledge and understanding of the content of primary school syllabus. The programme also attempted to familiarise the teacher with the textbooks and teacher's guides, and primary science kits prepared by the NCERT and adapted by the States.

15.6.5 Television for Education — The Post SITE Scenario

The experiences learned during SITE led to the establishment of a few national level educational institutions. These institutions were provided with production facilities and later on were allotted transmission time on nation television network. Today, telecast mode is use to support school as well as college level education. The major agencies involved for different segments of target students are:

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Primary Education | - SIETs |
| 2. Secondary School Education | - National Open School, SIETs |
| 3. College Education | - AVRCs/EMRCs, EMPC-IGNOU |

Other than the above Institutions, Technical Teachers Training Institutes, Indian Institute of Technologies, and Adult Education Centres also contribute to the programmes and it is broadcast on 'Gyandarshan' Channel. have ETV production cells. They produce programmes for their specific target group.

15.6.6 Efforts of State Institutes of Educational Technology

After SITE was over, the efforts of providing television support to education continued. Enrichment programmes for school children was initiated in 1982-83. At Delhi, the erstwhile Centre of Educational Technology and the Department of Teaching of the National Council for Education, Research and Training (NCERT) Aids were merged to form Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET). CIET was set up by in 1984 to coordinate this national programme.

State Institutes of Educational Technology (SIETs) were established in six states headquarters namely; Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Bhubaneswar (Orissa), Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Patna (Bihar), and Pune (Maharashtra). In states, that do not have a SIET, local Doordarshan Kendras (television stations) themselves produce ETV programmes for schools. These programmes are mainly syllabus-oriented programmes meant to be viewed in the classroom.

The programmes produced by each SIET are telecast every day for 45 minutes in the regional languages aiming at children of different age groups. To receive these programmes TV sets have been provided to a large number of schools, mainly in the rural areas. Presently the emphasis is on the telecast of programmes related to the syllabus of minimal level of learning as devised by the (NCERT). SIETs also produce some programmes for Secondary and Higher Secondary level of education. Some programmes of teacher orientation/training are also produced by SIETs-CIET. Similar effort is made on producing audio cassettes and distributed among the school. Not much efforts have been made to organise its distribution, dissemination and use.

Learning have been good. Children liked the medium and gain score was high. Unfortunately, not all the schools have been covered under the programme and it created another gap between the "Have schools" and "Have not schools". The biggest handicap is the electricity; connection in the school buildings and uninterrupted power supply.

Check Your Progress 3

- 5) Mention the mass media efforts for elementary level education?

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- 6) Briefly mention the mass media efforts for secondary level education?

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15.7 MASS MEDIA IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

15.7.1 National Open School

Programmes for the senior secondary school students were introduced in 1998 by broadcast of curriculum based programmes for the CBSE syllabus. The programmes are produced at CIET and National Open School (NOS) in Delhi. Presently, the telecast is organized on Gyandarshan educational channel. Audio and video programmes are made available to NOS study centres for students to use during their Personal Contact programmes.

15.7.2 The IGNOU Programmes

The Open Universities has been paying particular attention to the rapid advance of the Association for Media-Based Continuing Education (AMCEE) in the USA. The contribution of the Open University, Milton Keynes, UK gave a boost to the process of distance learning through television. In India the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is the nodal agency.

15.7.3 Countrywide Classroom

For the college level education, programmes are telecast under the Countrywide Classroom (CWC) broadcasts of the University Grants Commission (UGC). After the launching of the multi-purpose satellite INSAT, on 15 August 1984 the UGC has started broadcasting its educational television programmes in English for undergraduate students. In the beginning, the UGC Countrywide Classroom also used programmes produced from Germany, the USA, Britain, the Soviet Union, Canada and Japan. The programmes of the British Open University were most popular.

The activity is coordinated by the Consortium for Educational communication (CEC) and the programmes are produced at about seventeen production centres, called Audio – Visual Research Centres (AVRCs) and Educational Media Research Centres (EMRCs), set up at various Universities. The programmes are mostly enrichment programmes and they deal with subjects offered by the University. While most of the programmes are in English, some telecasts are also in Hindi language.

Undergraduate college students in small towns and rural areas are the primary target audience of the UGC broadcasts. Other students and teachers at the undergraduate level as well as the general public are the secondary audience but their needs do not dictate the programme content and approach. The programmes aim to upgrade, update and enrich the quality of education. They seek to arouse the interest of their viewers, to stimulate their minds and broaden their knowledge. From UGC and government resources, many of the colleges were given television sets to use the telecast for the students. Although the Countrywide Classroom is aimed mainly at undergraduate students, it reaches a wide cross-section of society, including academics and the general public.

15.7.4 Gyandarshan

As a joint venture of Ministry of HRD, Information & Broadcasting, the Prasar Bharati and IGNOU, Prashar Bharati was launched on 26th January 2000. It now started a full-fledged satellite channel 'Gyandarshan' for education. By 1st November, 2000 it became a 24 hour channel with non-stop transmission, daily offering a rich fare of multi-faceted programming.

The channel has earmarked time slots for curriculum-based as well as career based programmes targeting various groups of learners. Special programmes on art, culture, science and technology, etc., having a wider appeal across different age groups are telecast. The unique feature of the channel is the high degree of interactivity.

The channel has lent support to the students of Secondary and Senior Secondary School through specially designed programmes by NCERT/CIET, SIET, NOS and others. It also covers topics ranging from science and technology to environment, computer education to career counseling. This channel transmits educational programmes for schools, colleges and open learning systems on a regular basis.

On the same line, a regular radio Programme called "Gyanvani" is broadcasting educational programmes through its network.

15.7.5 Increasing Use of Interactive Television

The one-way-video-two-way audio teleconferencing has two major education applications. These are Distance Education and Continuing Education. The first one way video two ways audio teleconferencing modes in education was used for teaching to the students of Indian Institutes of Technology in 1983. The course on satellite communication was telecast from Ahmedabad and all the participating IITs - Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai were linked with satellite terminals.

During 1991-94, a large number of experiments were conducted and by now this technology is well proven. A transponder on board INSAT spacecraft was dedicated to Training and Development Communication Channel (TDCC)² in February 1995. It provides opportunity to a large number of government and non-government agencies to use the satellite link for education and development purposes. ordinary television receiver. At the classrooms level there can be two types of configuration; (a) classrooms, which can interact with the teaching end through a voice link i.e. a 'talk-back', and (b) classroom, which does not have this facility, i.e. a 'receive-only' locations.

Advantages of interactive educational channel (TDCC):

Conventional Education	Satellite Based Tele-education
Limited reach	Distance free
Interactive face to face learning	Interactive education
Travel cost is high	Great savings in the travel costs
Eminent experts cannot reach every place where the classes are organized	Eminent experts can reach and interact with participants
Lacks uniformity of education	Uniformity of education is inherent
Loss of information	No loss of information
Programme production is not involved	Programme production is very inexpensive as most of it is live
Interactivity is possible	Interactivity is inherent
Instant feedback takes place	Instant feedback is possible
Attendance and attention level is known	Attendance and attention level can be ascertained
Comprehension can be determined immediately	Determining comprehension is difficult
Long lead time is required	Long lead time is avoided
Timings can be decided locally	Timings are decided centrally
Repeatability is problem	Repeatability is possible

15.7.6 Applications of TDCC for Education

The channel has been extensively used by two major organisations - Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and All India Management Association (AIMA). IGNOU is not only one of the earliest users in its experimental stage before it was formally operationalised; it is one of the major users today with 10-15 days utilization in a month. With more than 300 reception terminals at Study Centres. IGNOU has its own studio at Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC), New Delhi with uplink facility. EMPC is responsible for the overall coordination of Gyandarshan channel. The telecasts are available at different timings on Gyandarshan channel. Some video lectures are also telecast at midnight. The IGNOU also telecasts college level programmes. Beneficiaries of this interactive distance-learning mode are the students and resource persons, and the Academic Counselors.

AIMA also had started using TDCC for distance education from very beginning. It used to plan the channel very regularly on the weekends. On an average four to five days per month were utilized by AIMA. It covered different topics of management for management students enrolled at AIMA centers at different places in different states.

Other institutions such as Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), National Open University (NOS), and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), and several national organizations/institutions that offer professional certificate/diploma/degree programmes in a distance education mode have also used the channel. The user organisations have established their receive networks while a common uplink is being shared. The use of this network is expected to grow in near future.

Check Your Progress 4

7) How mass media is integrated for distance education?

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8) What are private channel initiatives for distance education?

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15.8 SOME PRIVATE INITIATIVES

While all the private channels are vying with each other for more and more entertainment for attracting viewers, some of the channels also lend its channel for educational purposes. However, this effort is only limited to Zee Network, Discovery and National Geographic Channel.

15.8.1 ZED/ZILS TV: 24-Hour Learning Channel

The popular Hindi entertainment television channel – ZEE Network had initiated ZEE Education (ZED) and offered modular courses on its. In collaboration with Management

and Computer institutes, ZED offered courses on "Management" and on "Computer". It was a paid course and the student had to enroll themselves with outsourced Centers of ZED, located at more than 200 places in the country. Receiving of these programmes on cable TV required encryptor. ZED was as ZEE Interactive Learning System (ZILS). It has recently launched a 24-hour learning channel that intermingles learning with entertainment. The channel primarily focuses on providing productivity-oriented inputs to the target audiences, with a specific focus on corporate training needs. It will provide a wide variety of education content through its programmes focusing on pre-school children, school children, youth, women, corporate, IT, consumers and other training programmes. The emphasis of the channel is to blend satellite, video, the Internet and multimedia with traditional classroom learning and course material so as to boost learning effectiveness. It will have a new role for the students from 'being taught' to 'learning' and for teachers from 'expert' to 'collaborator' or 'guide'.

15.8.2 Kheda Communications Project (KCP)

SITE was an effort in centralized communication. However, there were some who were conscious of the need for local programmes and were also worried about the centralisation inherent in the technology of direct broadcasting. They conceived the idea of "limited rebroadcast", giving birth to the Kheda Communication Project (KCP³). This involved the setting-up of a low-power TV transmitter in Pij village of Kheda district in Gujarat.

As a part of KCP, syllabus based programmes were produced and the programmes were transmitted for the Kheda children. The programmes were very popular among the children. They started sending their feedback. The teachers were happy to note the interest and progress among the students. Unfortunately, by the time this programme picked up, Kheda was discontinued in 1985.

15.8.3 Jhabua Development Communications Project (JDCP)

After SITE and KCP, the new educational technology evolved. One-way video and two way audio teleconferencing, which were experimented parallel to KCP, were found very useful in education and training. Thus, Jhabua, a draught affected district of Madhya Pradesh, adjoining Gujarat were selected for combining the Kheda experiences and the use of teleconferencing mode of teaching for rural education and development programme. The project was called Jhabua Development Communications Project (JDCP⁴).

The major objective was to educate the rural mass in the areas of watershed development, health and education through satellite communication (TDCC). JDCP aimed at organizing intensive interactive educational for development functionaries and the rural population, including Panchayati Raj members, local NGOs, farmers, women, youth etc. The programmes were mainly in the areas of Health, Panchayati Raj, Government Schemes, and different aspects of Forestry. The experiment originally scheduled for two years, continued as a part of ongoing programme. At the initial stage it was run by ISRO but after four years was handed over to the Madhya Pradesh government.

15.8.4 Other Experiments and Efforts in Use of Mass Media for Education

Some technology experiments were also done with formal and non-formal system which had its bearing on country's present education system. Four such important national programmes merit mention. These are CLASS, PMOST, Class Room 2000+, and PREAL.

15.9 COMPUTER SUPPORTED EDUCATION

15.9.1 Computer Literacy and School Studies (CLASS)

The history of wide spread use interactive computer and Internet in education system today goes back to early 1980. As a good will gesture, the Government of UK had gifted 250 units of BBC micro (simple configuration with 10-inch monitor) computers to India in 1980. The idea was to provide 'hands on' experience to the school students. These sets were installed in selected high schools of various states in India during 1984-85. The project continued till march 1999 and covered more than 2300 schools in the country. This attempt showed a great potential for the private entrepreneurs to enter into computer education. The computer has now changed the face and pace of education in India.

15.9.2 Programme of Mass Orientation of School Teachers (PMOST)

Special orientations of a large number of mainly primary/elementary level schoolteachers were organized under a programme called Programme of Mass Orientation of School Teachers (PMOST). An estimated number of 5,00,000 teachers (50 teachers in one camp) participated in 10,000 teacher's orientation camps conducted in 2,500 training centers for 10 days (09.00 hours to 17.00 hours on all days). SIETs/CIET prepared total 41 modules of 11 to 30 minutes. The programmes for telecast were originally produced in Hindi language. In case of non-Hindi regions the programmes in English were preceded by synopsis in local languages. The objective of PMOST was to create a conducive climate for generating initiative in teachers for implementation of the present education policy at school level.

15.9.3 Class Room 2000+

Classroom 2000+ was primarily conducted IN 1993 as a technology demonstration for the application of technologies like TV, computer and telephone to improve instructional quality and efficiency, through distance mode. Electronic Media Production Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was involved in the experiment, which was conducted with six Kendriya Vidyalayas in the countries. The operational feasibility was viewed primarily from the angle of classroom organization namely class size, furniture, sitting arrangements, physical layout of the classroom, space student, placement and location of the hardware - TV set, computer and telephone.

On pedagogy front, the experiment was not considered as success. The students did not gain much. For operational difficulties, teachers and students interaction was not up to mark. The major limitation of this educational technology experiment was that it cannot cover the curriculum and cannot prepare the students for examination. However this was considered good for teaching mathematics and science.

As a technology use, this 10 days long experimental project was successful. But this instructional approach proved to a costly affair as each school needs colour television, computer and telephone facility and keypad for each student. For a country like India, an investment of more than US\$ 350 million on educational technology was a heavy burden on the nation

15.10 EDUCATION RADIO

15.10.1 Project in Radio Education for Adult Literacy (PREAL)

For the first time, radio was used in the adult education classes for spreading adult literacy under the National Literacy Mission (NLM) programme of the Government of India. The project launched in 1990 (broadcast between December, 1990 to June 1991)

selected approximately 3,600 Adult Education Centres (AECs) in selected districts of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In total, nearly 108,000 adult learners were selected to participate in this project.

26 radio programmes of 20 minutes duration were produced by All India Radio (AIR). Each programme was broadcast twice a week by concerned AIR station. Radio-cum-tape-recorder (Two –in-one) sets and cassettes were provided to record the programmes and re-run it on other days. Print material was used as supplement for the programme. The objective of the project was to make the participants achieve self-reliance in literacy and numeracy and participate in the process of development.

The project met with limited success because of certain important dimensions such as selection of the Adult education centres, the participants and the instructors, the timings of the broadcast and the training at the centre level. The first pre-requisite is the strengthening the functioning of the AECs, which was not the mandate of the project.

15.11 LET'S SUM UP

As per the statistics (2001) there are more than 638 lakh Primary schools (up to class V), 206 lakh Middle and Upper primary schools (Class VI - VIII), 126 lakh High/Highest and equivalent level of schools (IX – XII), and 8000 colleges in the country. A total number million students are enrolled in Primary schools. We find a sharp decline of the number (only 43 million) when it reached to middle and upper primary level. By the time they go to High/Highest secondary school, this number drops down to 28 million. Dropouts have been reported more in rural and tribal areas.

Education for all is the constitutional agenda of the Government of India and all State governments are fully committed to it. Attempts have been made and today we have nearly 640 lakh primary schools, 126 lakh secondary schools, 8000 Colleges a large number of students enrolled. Still nearly, 35 percent (24 percent males and 46 percent females) illiterates are there in the country. Attempts have been made to reach to all corners but the quality of the teachers as well as teaching have suffered a lot.

Mass media is one way of taking the quality education, more so the specialised education to any where in the country. The mass media helps delivery of education to any far away places in real time and it is most cost effective. Several experiments have been carried out and now there is operational system, which tries to take the tele-education programmes on 24 hour channels. There is need to integrate this media into education system. Even today only, a small number of schools and colleges are equipped to receive and use the programmes for their students. A total integration of tele-education in the school system is required. The others non-school target group will be benefited any way.

The biggest handicap in use of mass media for education or for development is the power supply in the schools. A large number of Primary schools in the country do not have electric connection. Since education is day time affair, probably, they do not need power supply. Even during SITE time special efforts were made to get power connection to television centres in the SITE villages. After more than 25 years the situation in Indian villages needs special attention. It remind us to the popular saying – “Where there is will there is way”. Do we lack national will, certainly not. Yes, we have not tried hard to find out our ways. Time has come and we have to tighten our belt to achieve the goal as fast as we can.

Notes:

- 1) In India, a Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was carried out from 1975 to 1976, using the United States ATS-6 satellite stationed over the

Indian Ocean. The experiment was conducted by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) working in collaboration with All India Radio/Doordarshan. ITV programs produced domestically were broadcast from Earth stations in Ahmedabad and Delhi via ATS-6.

- 2) The technical configuration of TDCC consists of three elements - the teaching end, the spacecraft, and the classroom. The Teaching End consisting of a small studio and an uplink earth station. The spacecraft - INSAT satellite has one extended C-band transponder earmarked for the TDCC. A classroom consists of Direct Reception System (DRS), which consists of low-cost dish antenna.
- 3) KCP, the baby of ISRO, was done as an experiment within SITE. A low-power transmitter in local Gujarati language transmitted special half an hour programme to Kheda district. 550 community TV sets in about 400 villages of Kheda district were covered under this project. The project continued for almost 17 years. Over period of time the number of TV sets increased to more than 1000 community TV sets.

Out of the 90 minutes programme for Kheda villages, the KCP team of ISRO produced 45 minutes programme. These were development and education-oriented, programmes. Other 45 minutes were produced by Doordarshan, the national TV organisation and covered mainly news, topical issues and general entertainment. The audience for Kheda programmes was the small farmers, landless labourers and children.

- 4) JDCP was conducted in the drought prone district of Madhya Pradesh, selected by Planning Commission, Govt. of India as one of the priority district for Integrated Mission for Sustainable Development. 150 villages were selected where a television set was installed in each village for receiving locally produced television programmes. All the 12 block headquarters were equipped with interactive uplink facility for teleconferencing. The interactive facilities at the block level were primarily used for training to the development functionaries.

This was the third major rural project undertaken by ISRO. This two-year project starting November 1996 was extended for one more year. Afterward the operation and system management has been taken over by the Madhya Pradesh Academy of Administration, Government of Madhya Pradesh who was technically trained by ISRO team.

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