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Primary and Secondary Education in India: A Descriptive Analysis

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PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

by

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An Essay

Presented to the Faculty of
Bucknell University
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Education

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Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
I. General Organization of Schools	3
II. Curriculum	15
III. Methods of Instruction	23
IV. Problems Unique to the Indian Schools	28
V. Similarities and Differences with American Schools	37
VI. Summary and Conclusion	42
Bibliography	46
List of Footnotes	48

To My Uneducated Parents
Who Made My Life a Great Success

So long as there is one child who has failed to obtain the precise educational treatment his individuality requires; so long as a single child goes hungry, has nowhere to play, fails to receive the medical attention he needs; so long as the nation fails to train and provide scope for every atom of outstanding ability it can find; so long as there are administrators or teachers who feel no sense of mission, who cannot administer or who cannot teach, the system will remain incomplete.

--Anonymous.

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First, I owe a significant debt of gratitude to Paul DeHoff, the Coordinator of Graduate Studies, who was very prompt in giving replies for all my enquiries even though I was thousands and thousands of miles away; thus, making this distance null and void in the matter of correspondence. Second, my appreciation is due to my advisor, Dr. Hugh McKeegan, who entrusted me to a fine Christian gentleman, Dr. J. William Moore, when he was going on sabbatical leave to England. Further, he taught me to write and organize this essay, and he created in me the art of research. Still, I owe him a lot in getting this essay edited and typed. Third, I wish to thank Dr. J. William Moore, who took the initiative in persuading the University authorities to grant me a scholarship. Fourth, I am grateful to Rev. A. T. Fishman, Redlands, California, who was my teacher, principal, and advisor and who worked in India as a missionary for 42 1/2 years and provided my living expenses here at Bucknell University. And finally, my thanks goes to a high school girl, Brenda Porter, who lives in Benezette, Pennsylvania, who encouraged me with her letters telephone talks, and paying a visit to me as long as I wrote the essay.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

If you are planning for one year, plant grain.
If you are planning for ten years, plant trees.
If you are planning for a hundred years, plant men.

--An Old Chinese Saying.

"What is education? It is a study of process of problem identification and problem solution related to the acquisition and generation of knowledge."¹

"Education is the system by which we uphold the values of life, liberty and the pursuit of knowledge."²

"The consciousness which comes in conflict with the unconsciousness is the product of education."³

INTRODUCTION

The educational system of the Republic of India reflects both its ~~ancient~~ ancient culture and its recent social awakening. In the past, education was for the select few; today, India's educators and political leaders strive not only to educate the majority but also to adapt education to the country's social needs.

Ever since the attainment of independence in 1947, government of India had been giving considerable attention to the reorganization of education and development of a national system of education rooted in the basic values and the cherished tradition of the Indian nation and suited to the needs and aspiration of a modern society.

India is a country where all the problems of mankind are displayed in accentuated form: over-population, malnutrition, ignorance on a scale which remarkable increases in the provision of schooling have been unable to overcome. In addition, there are the difficulties of multilingualism, religious or communal diversity, discrepancies of wealth and technical development and a clutter of unreconciled legacies from the past. Therefore, the study of Indian progress towards educational advance is full of lessons for any observer. It excites admiration and sympathy for much that has been achieved but leaves an overwhelming sense of the need for further endeavors in which the whole of mankind is somehow involved. It is not only a matter of human concern or technical assistance; the solution of many Indian problems may represent a turning point for much educational and social decision likely to influence the future of the majority of mankind.

Here is the opening statement of an American who visited India recently and stayed there for some time.

"India means many things to many people, but to Wilbur N. Palmquist, Jr., it is a distressing topic of conversation."

Poverty, illiteracy, mismanagement and bribery are dominant in every part of the country.

Chapter I

General Organization of Schools

National Policies and Goals

India affirms its educational purposes in its Constitution.

In the section, The Constitution, on "Fundamental Rights," the Constitution states:

"No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them."¹

"All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice."²

In Part IV, entitled "Directive Principles of State Policy," the Constitution states:

"The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right...to education...."³

"The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen."⁴

Although the provisions in this part of the Constitution are not enforceable in court, the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country, and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

Five-Year Plans

The Five-Year Plans have also emphasized that education is vitally important both to the success of India's self-government and also to the attainment of her national goals. The following statements are from the first, second, and third plans, respectively:

In a democratic set-up the role of education becomes crucial, since it can function effectively only if there is an intelligent participation of the masses in the affairs of the country.⁵

The system of education in a country has a determining influence on the rate at which economic progress is achieved and the benefits which can be derived from it.⁶

Education is the most important single factor in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress and in creating a social order founded on the values of freedom, social justice, and equal opportunity.... In all branches of national life, education becomes the focal point of planned development.... At all stages of education, the aim must be to develop both skill and knowledge and a creative outlook, a feeling of national unity which stands above religion, caste and language and an understanding of common interests and obligations.⁷

Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of India defines, more clearly than the United States, the educational responsibility of both the Federal and State Governments. The Union List of Governmental Powers describes those functions for which the Federal (or union) Government is responsible; the State Lists, those for which State Governments are responsible; and the Concurrent, those for which responsibility is divided between the State and Federal Government.

Even though there are separate lists, there is the revival of

appropriations in the form of grants to the States by the Federal Government to help finance public education.

State Educational Organization

The main responsibility for education rests with the States, and State Governments and are a major source of revenue for all educational levels. Organization for the administration and supervision of education is similar from State to State, although variations have increased with individual efforts to develop all educational levels rapidly.

In each State, an Education Minister heads the educational structure; in some of the large States a Deputy Minister may assist him; and in every State an Education Secretary is in immediate charge of the Education Department. The whole structure is usually divided into a small secretariat, which serves as a policy-making and coordinating agency, and a larger directorate of education, which handles mainly elementary and secondary education and is responsible for supervising, regulating and inspecting schools. In some states, special directorates ~~within the~~ education department deal with higher and technical education; and in others, technical education is the responsibility of a department of industry or a department of public works.

The great increase of educational activity during the last two decades has brought about not only an expansion in the size and complexity of the State educational organization, but also several important new developments. Some States have

* Passed laws making primary and secondary education compulsory.

- * Established boards for secondary education.
- * Initiated school services related to audiovisual aids, curriculum planning, evaluation, guidance, textbooks, and other matters.
- * Established advisory bodies on education, with both official and non-official representation.
- * Decentralized the supervising and inspecting functions of State education departments to district offices and inspectors.
- * Increased local control and support of primary education consistent with a national effort to organize, strengthen, and stimulate local self-government.

National Educational Organization

The Federal Government discharges its educational responsibilities primarily through its Ministry of Education. Other ministries have main responsibility for education in their respective fields, such as, the Ministry of Agriculture for agricultural education, and the Ministry of Health for medical education. A total of 18 ~~ministries~~ ⁸ in 1963 reported education and training activities.

The Minister of Education has full cabinet rank in the Government of India. Under him are two deputy ministers, two secretaries, one additional secretary, two joint secretaries, and two joint educational advisers. Each of 12 divisions is headed by a Deputy Secretary or a Deputy Educational Adviser. The additional secretary supervises higher education through the University Education Division, headed by one deputy educational adviser and through the Division of Technical Education,

headed by three deputy educational advisers. Several other divisions are partially concerned with aspects of higher education, such as scholarships.

The Educational Ladder

The pattern of the Indian educational system has been shifting rapidly since 1947. As each State has sought to develop its own educational system, variations have occurred between States. Successful efforts to extend the total years of schooling have led to lengthening the duration of some levels and to forming new ones.

Preprimary Education. In India, preprimary education, which is education below the primary level for children under 6 years of age, usually has been provided by private agencies located in urban areas and supported by fees. The number of preprimary schools receiving little or no government assistance has been increasing.

9

Enrollment in preprimary schools has been increasing.

Year	Number	Percent of Age Group
1950-51	5,177	18.3
1955-56	7,135	21.3
1960-61	8,612	22.3
1965-66	11,773	26.7

Elementary Education. The Constitution requires the States to endeavor to provide ... "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years."

10

The age at which such education must first be provided has not been

the age of 6 and 10, and afterwards its scope was to be extended for the children between the age of 11 and 14.

There was utter failure of this pattern of education due to the following reasons:

- a. Lack of adequately trained teachers
- b. Lack of funds to meet the colossal problems
- c. Lack of suitable buildings
- d. Lack of faith of the people in Basic Education
- e. Change-over is always slow.

However, the usual primary schools began to develop to reduce illiteracy under the various five-year plans.

Control of Primary Education

All the primary schools in the district headquarters and city headquarters are under the control of the District Education Officer. District in the Indian sense is an administrative unit and revenue collecting center. Under the District Education Officer, there are Deputy Inspectors of Schools who are responsible for the proper administration and supervision of all primary schools. There are two to three types of primary schools of which I explain later.

All the village primary schools are under the control of Panchayat Raj. Panchayat Raj means government by locally elected councils. The objective of Panchayat Raj is to radically decentralize and demicratize control of many local government functions, including primary education. It was expected that popular participation and leadership at the local

level would make education more meaningful and effective, release energies and resources, and reduce the self serving behavior and indifference to local needs and conditions that seem to plague centralized educational (and other) bureaucracies.

13

The controlling system of primary education of a State called Rajasthan is explained here. And the system is similar in every State in India.

Before the management of primary education was transferred to Panchayat Raj (PR) institutions, primary schools in Rajasthan were managed by the education department of the government of Rajasthan, which was responsible for administrative control and technical supervision. As a result of the transfer, administrative control is now vested in PR institutions, mainly 232 Panchayat Samithis elected bodies paralleling the development block, a subunit of Rajasthan States, twenty-five districts. Technical supervision and guidance continue to be the obligations of the education department. Thus, there is now a pattern of dual control and supervision.

Teachers are recruited and transferred by the concurrent action of the BDO (block development officer), an administrative officer attached to the Panchayat Samithis and the elected pradhan (Chairman) of the Panchayat Samithi. Disciplinary action against the Panchayat Samithi teacher can be taken by the district establishment committee, one administrative and political layer above the Panchayat Samithi, of which the district education officer is a member. All of the sub-deputy inspectors of schools (SDI) have been transferred on deputation to Panchayat Samithis for inspection and supervision of the primary schools and are

designated as extension officers, education (E.D.'s education). They are under the administrative control of the BDO and under the technical control of the Education Department. The E.D.'s, education, write the confidential report on the primary school teacher. The Panchayat Samithis gets grants-in-aid on a 100 percent basis for salaries and allowances of teachers. In regard to other items of expenditure, aid is provided on a 50 percent matching basis. There are about 19,000 schools, 45,000 teachers, and 2,000,000 students under the 232 Panchayat Samithis in Rajasthan. ¹⁴

When we categorize the Indian primary schools on the basis of number of teachers working in them, there are four types of schools: (1) single teacher schools, (2) double teacher schools, (3) triple teacher schools, and (4) multiple teacher schools. India is a country of 550,000 farm villages, where over 80 percent of the people live. Most of the villages have only about 500 persons. ¹⁵

In a single teacher school, the teacher handles all the four classes single-handed. The number of students attending these schools is not so large, and such a teacher is able to pay individual attention to pupils. This institution, "single teacher school," is one of India's oldest traditions in education. If the strength exceeds 60, then there are two teachers who can handle five classes. If the strength is still great, there are three teachers who can handle five classes. If the strength exceeds more than a hundred boys, there are more than three teachers. I worked as a single teacher, double teacher, and triple teacher. Hence, I write this information out of my own experience. When compared to the strength of the city primary schools, the strength in the village schools

is very much less. The strength in each class of a city, primary school is about 60, and the strength in each class of a village, primary school is less than 20.

Secondary Education

Secondary Education began in India systematically with the advent of the British. The people of India had a keen desire to learn the English language for getting service under the British Government. It was considered a rare privilege. Again, the credit of starting these schools goes to the Christian Missionaries. Government and private enterprise entered into this field afterwards. The Christian institutions, however, dominated the field for a long time.

After India achieved independence, the first commission of national significance was appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, an eminent educationist, who later became the President of India. This Commission was appointed in the year 1948, and it completed its task within a year. It was really a misfortune of the country that most of the recommendations of this Commission could not be given a practical shape. Then came the Commission on Secondary Education under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mudaliar. The recommendations of this Commission were also given a practical shape only in piecemeal. They could not be implemented in a comprehensive manner. Since 1956, a lot of change had taken place in the thinking as well as the actual deeds of this country. It had been decreed that 'Democratic Socialism' shall be the national objective. Building of a socialist society, through democratic means involves a lot of change and reorientation of education so that it might be an effective

instrument of social change.

In 1964, the Kothari Commission was appointed by the Federal Government. This commission recommended a permanent feature of the educational system, secondary schools of two types: high schools of ten-year course and high secondary schools of twelve-year course of education. An essential requirement for raising the standard should be that the institution need be large, centrally located and equitably distributed between the rural and urban areas. It would also be necessary to review the status of the existing higher secondary schools, and those which are un-economic or of sub-standard may be reconverted into high schools.

According to this commission, there is an external examination at the end of class ten (grade X) to mark the termination of the first ten years of general education which determines the stage of secondary education.

Education of Women and Coeducation

During the post-independence period, the education of girls (women) has been progressing more rapidly than that of boys at all stages of education. This is so because old taboos and prejudices gradually waned. Indian women are eager to shoulder the great social and economic responsibilities demanded of them. They had taken an active part in the independence struggle, and now they would like to contribute their little mite.

In spite of recommendations of various commissions, women's education has not made as much progress as was desired. The women's strength in colleges is far below in proportion to that in schools. Their number

in colleges is also much lower than that of the boys. The reasons for this state of affairs are clear. When the choice has to be made with regard to the education of the boy or the girl, in view of the family's limited resources, the boy often gets the advantage. Moreover, the boy is their prospective bread winner. Marriage gets precedence over education in case of girls.

In conclusion, I would recommend that women's education should receive greater attention. Their education is important because it will make available to the country a wealth of capacity that is now largely wasted through sheer lack of proper opportunities. As a matter of fact, now India has a woman Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who had her education in England and who was properly trained to be the Prime Minister by her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the first Prime Minister of India.

Coeducation is the education of boys and girls together in the same institution, admission being secured on equal terms and opportunities being offered for the mixing of both sexes in all activities connected with the institution. It has been a perplexing problem in the country, and coeducation is a recent origin in India. We do not come across any references from our ancient culture about coeducation. Our ancestors were against this institution, but it is a common practice in the West. Pestalozzi considered it as quite useful. Coeducation in the real sense obtains in America and the U.S.S.R. In India, it is confined to the primary and college stages. People are against having it at all at the secondary stage. In other countries, coeducation is a favorable idea, but in India it has remained in the nature of a problem.

Chapter II

Curriculum

What is a curriculum? It is a Latin word which means the "race-course" or "path," which one runs to reach a goal. Interpreted accordingly, a curriculum is the instructional and the educational program which, by following, the pupils achieve their goals, ideals and aspirations of life. It is the curriculum through which the general aims of a school receive concrete expression. The curriculum consists of those pupils' experiences and activities that come under the guidance of the school. In the words of Cunningham, "It is a tool in the hands of the artist (the teacher) to mold his material (the pupil) in accordance with his ideals in his studio (the school)." The courses of study do list much of the content and indicate many activities, but they form only part of the curriculum. Instead of including academic subjects only, it "includes the totality of experiences that a pupil receives through the manifold activities that go on in the school, in the classroom, library, laboratory, workshop, playgrounds, and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. In this sense, the whole life of the school becomes the curriculum which can touch the life of students at all points and help in the evolution of a balanced personality."¹

An American Educationist defines curriculum in the following two ways:

1. "A sequence of potential experiences is set up in the school for the purpose of disciplining the children and youth in group ways of

thinking and acting; this set of experience is referred to as the curriculum."

2. "Curriculum is a plan for learning, therefore, what is known about the learning process and development of the individual has bearing on the shaping of a curriculum."²

Man's knowledge and control over nature has tended continually to increase. There are few, if any, instances in which the mastery of nature once achieved was ever lost again. Each new step in the mastery of nature removed materials from the sphere of magic and religion and transferred them to the sphere of education and science. Time and distance are completely annihilated. And the world has become one and very small.

The future of India is now being shaped in her classrooms. It is not only a saying but a reality. In a world based on science and technology, it is the education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. On the quality and number of persons coming out of our schools will depend our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction whose chief objective is to raise the standard of living of the general masses. The result of getting this objective accomplished depends upon the proper school curriculum.

Essentials of Curriculum Improvement

"How change occurs. The first stage is that initiation in which ideas for change are launched and decisions are made regarding the nature, direction, and extent of change. The second stage is said to be one of the legitimation, in which the sentiment on behalf of a change is being

consummated. The third stage involves congruences of the separate systems of the values which are held by the person or persons seeking to create change and by the person or persons who are targets or human subjects of the proposed change."³

The schools may be given freedom to experiment with new curricula that suit them. The training colleges of the universities through their experimental school may give a lead in this respect.

The formation of Subject Teachers' Associations in the different school subjects will help to stimulate experimentation and the State Education Departments should help and coordinate with the association in their activities.

Organization of Curriculum

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) which worked on the reorganization of the educational system in India recommended that school curriculum should be organized on the following lines, and the Indian schools run on this pattern.

1. In non-vocational schools, a common curriculum of general education should be provided for the first ten years of school education and diversification of studies, and specialization should begin only at the higher secondary stage.

2. At the lower primary stage, the curriculum should be simple with lesser loads of formal subjects and emphasis on language, elementary mathematics, and environmental studies. The study of problems relating to beginning reading accompanied by a vigorous program of improving

reading instructions at the lower primary stage should receive great emphasis.

3. At the higher primary stage, the teaching methods will become more systematic, and the standards of attainment shall be more specific.

4. At the lower secondary stage and higher secondary stage, the studies of subjects will gain rigor and depth besides bringing diversification in such a manner as may enable the pupils to study a group of any three subjects in depth. In order to ensure balanced development, the curriculum at the higher secondary stage should provide half the time to the electives, one fourth of the time to the languages, and one-fourth of the time to the physical education, arts, crafts, moral and spiritual education.

5. At the secondary stage, the courses should be provided at two levels. The program may be done within or outside school hours or on a self-study basis. Mathematics, science, and languages at the lower secondary stage should form the basis of beginning.

The following is the curriculum at different stages.

NOTE: In India, we call the grades classes. ^{ye}Whenever the reader comes across the class, he should take it as a grade in the American sense.

1. Lower Primary Stage (Classes I-IV)

- a. One language--the mother-tongue or the regional language.
- b. Mathematics.
- c. Study of environment (covering science and social studies in classes III and IV).

- d. Creative activities.
 - e. Work-experience and social service.
 - f. Health Education
2. Higher primary stage (Classes V-VII)
- a. Two languages--(i) the mother-tongue or the regional language, and (ii) Hindi or English.
- NOTE: A third language (English, Hindi or the regional language) may be studied on an optional basis.
- b. Mathematics.
 - c. Science.
 - d. Social studies (or History, Geography, and Civics)
 - e. Art.
 - f. Work-experience and social service.
 - g. Physical Education.
 - h. Education in Moral and Spiritual Values.
3. Lower Secondary Stage (Classes VII-X)
- a. Three languages. In non-Hindi speaking areas, these languages will normally be (i) the mother-tongue or the regional language, (ii) Hindi at a higher or lower level. (iii) English at a higher or lower level. In Hindi speaking they will normally be (i) the mother tongue or the regional languages, (ii) English (or Hindi, if English has already been taken as the mother-tongue), and (iii) a modern Indian language other than Hindi.

NOTE: A classical language may be studied in addition to the above three languages ^{as} (on) an optional basis.

- b. Mathematics.
- c. Science.
- d. History, Geography and Civics.
- e. Art.
- f. Work-experience and social service.
- g. Physical Education.
- h. Education in Moral and Spiritual Values.

4. Higher Secondary Stage (Classes XI-XII)

a. Any two languages, including modern Indian language, any modern foreign language, and any classical language.

b. Any three subjects from the following:

An additional language, History, Geography, Economics, Logic, Psychology, Art, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, ~~and~~ Biology, Geology, Home Sciences.

- c. Work-experience and social service.
- d. Physical Education.
- e. Art or crafts.
- f. Education in Moral and Spiritual values.

Study of languages. The following suggestions have been made by the Commission:

1. A policy regarding the language study is most essential at the school stage.

2. The modification of the language formula should be guided by the following principles:

- a. Hindi as the official language of the Federal should enjoy as much importance as the mother-tongue.
- b. A working knowledge of English will continue to be an asset to the students.
- c. The proficiency in a language depends as much upon the types of teachers and facilities as upon the length of time in which it is learned.
- d. The most suitable stage for learning three languages is the lower secondary stage, i.e., from classes VIII to X.
- e. Introduction of two additional languages should be staggered.
- f. Hindi or English should be introduced at a point when there is the greatest motivation or the need.

Science and mathematics education. These two subjects should be taught on a compulsory basis to all pupils as a part of general education during the first ten years of schooling. In addition, there should be provision of special courses in science and mathematics at the secondary stage for students of more than average ability.

Social studies and social sciences. These subjects should be so taught that the feeling of development of good citizenship and emotional integration may be developed. The syllabus should lay stress on the idea of national unity of men.

Work-experience. At the lower, secondary stage, the work-experience

is in the form of workshop training. At the higher, secondary stage, it is provided in the school workshop form or commercial and industrial establishments.

Physical education. Physical education is important for physical fitness and efficiency, mental alertness, and character-building. Hence, the programs are reexamined and redesigned in the light of certain basic principles of child growth.

Education in Moral and Spiritual Values. Spiritual and moral education is imparted through direct or indirect methods. It is helpful in ethical teachings of great religions. One or two periods are set aside for instructions in moral and spiritual values. The subject is treated on a comprehensive basis and not divorced from the rest of the curriculum.

Chapter III

Methods of Instruction

In most of the Indian schools, Herbart's view of "apperception" method of teaching is adopted. This method contains famous five steps (preparation, presentation, comparison and abstraction, generalization, and application). Especially in the elementary schools, correlation of subject matter is followed. Due to rigidity of the educational system, the school teaching is dull and uninspiring. Hence, certain Education Commissions and the Kothari Commission suggest the following points for effective teaching.

Elasticity and dynamism. In a modern society, where the rate of change and the growth of knowledge is very rapid, the educational system must be elastic and dynamic. Hence, the implication is that a good educational system should be dynamic, flexible, and discriminating so that the institutions and teachers may proceed along different levels of development. Such elasticity and dynamism are possible if the teachers are supported by the administrative authority, a general atmosphere of reform, a mastery of subject matter, leadership, provided by training institutions, and the availability of teaching materials. The educational administration can encourage and hasten the diffusion of new teaching methods in stages according to the ability of the schools, giving necessary in-service training to teachers and by providing sufficient guide materials.

Textbooks, teachers' guides and materials. Textbooks and materials are the main sources of teaching in Indian schools. Hence, the following steps are taken to improve the quality of textbooks and material.

1. A progressive form of textbook production at the national level is implemented by mobilizing the best talents in the country. Such books would facilitate the definition and practical indication of expected standards. Besides, they would also help in national integration.

2. The government of India took steps to establish in the public sector, an autonomous organization for production of textbooks at the national level.

3. The preparation, tryout, and the evaluation of textbooks is the responsibility of the Education Department of the State. However, the sale and distribution of textbooks are better left to the student cooperatives and not be assumed by the Education Department.

4. At the State level, the production of textbooks and teaching aids is entrusted to an autonomous agency which functions in close liaison with the State Education Department.

5. A machinery is set up in the State for continuous revision and improvement of the textbooks.

6. At least three or four textbooks are made available in each subject so that a choice is made by the schools.

7. The incentive to write books is encouraged in as many quarters as possible. Special encouragement is given to teachers to write books. The Learned Societies give adequate professional recognition to outstanding textbooks.

8. Good textbooks are supplemented by teachers' guides and other instructional material.

9. Lists of minimum teaching aids and equipment needed by each category of schools is prepared. These are kept as economical as possible. But once a certain minimum equipment is considered necessary, steps are taken to see that it is given to every school on a priority basis.

10. The Education Department works with All India Radio for the use of radio lessons, supplemented with printed material for teachers and, if possible, for pupils. The broadcasting of special radio talks is broadcast to the teachers so that they can deepen their subject knowledge and to guide them in lesson preparation.

11. The teachers are helped and trained to rely on less expensive and locally available teaching aids.

Class size. The number of students in each class ranges from 50 to 60 in primary sections and 40 to 50 in the secondary sections. Since India is a developing country, there is every hope for the increase of students in every class.

School buildings. There are no proper school buildings in many of the Indian towns. And many schools are housed in rented buildings which a visitor thinks are private homes. In most of the Indian villages, the primary schools are housed in thatched huts having mud walls without proper flooring. And in many places, classes are conducted in the open air and under the shade of trees. Mrs. Wiser in her "A Classic Description of Village India: Behind the Mud Walls," 1930-1960, says that "a night school is run in a stable with the family buffalo eating or sleeping beside the students."²

The following steps are taken to improve the unsatisfactory position of the school buildings.³

1. The central and State budget is increased to make adequate allocations for construction of school buildings.
2. The norms and guidance for spacing and planning of school buildings is put into practice.
3. Efforts are made to encourage local initiative and contribution in putting up school buildings.
4. With a view to accelerate provision of school building, construction in rural areas is entrusted to village panchayats or local communities; and in urban areas, corporations and municipalities are utilized for the purpose.

Guidance and counseling. Guidance and counseling is regarded as an integral part of education and is aimed at assisting the individuals to make decisions and adjustments from time to time.

1. Guidance at the primary stage.

The program is introduced through simple measures, such as

- a. familiarizing pupil-teachers with diagnostic testing and the problem of individual differences.
 - b. Organizing in-service training centers.
 - c. Producing occupational literature.
 - d. Helping pupil and parents in the choice of further education.
2. Guidance at the secondary stage.
 - a. Guidance at the secondary stage is provided in identification

and development of abilities and interests of adolescent pupils.

b. All the secondary school teachers are introduced to guidance concepts through pre- or in-service training.

c. Arrangements are made for professional training of guidance workers by the State Bureaus of Guidance and advanced training is organized at the national level.

Search for and development of talent. Talented pupils are traced out at all stages. A variety of extra-mural programs are organized besides the programs for enrichment and advanced curricula in summer schools and other places of educational interest. Teachers are so trained that they adopt the special methods to deal with them for free expression and creative work.

Backward child. Efforts are made to diagnose the causes of under-achievement and to formulate and implement remedial programs within the school system with the help of interested teachers and parent-teacher associations.

Chapter IV

Problems Unique to the Indian Schools

The school curriculum in India is very narrowly conceived and largely out of date. Education is a three-fold process of imparting knowledge, developing skill, and inculcating proper interests, attitudes and values. Indian schools are mostly concerned with imparting knowledge and carrying out even this in an unsatisfactory way. The curriculum places a premium on bookish knowledge and rote learning, makes inadequate provisions for practical activities and experiences, and is dominated by examinations. Moreover, as the development of the right kind of interests, attitudes, and values are not given sufficient emphasis, the curriculum becomes not only out of step with the modern knowledge but also out of time with the life of people. Thus, there is urgent need to raise, upgrade and improve the school curriculum. Hence, a unified approach should be taken to the framing of the entire school curriculum, a new definition of the content of general education, and a new approach to the place of specialization.

India is a vast country with a great diversity of culture, religion, language, caste, etc., which create many problems.

The school curriculum is very narrowly conceived and largely out of date. Its aim is to pass certain examinations in order to enter the next stage of education. Actually, education is a three-fold process of imparting knowledge, developing skill and inculcating proper interests, attitudes and values. Indian schools are mostly concerned with the imparting of knowledge and carry out even this in an unsatisfactory way.

As previously stated, the curriculum places a premium on bookish knowledge and rote learning. Abstract and theoretical things are emphasized. Concrete and practical things are neglected. No training for tackling practical problems of life is given. Pupils' interests and capacities do not get the proper outlet, and their experiences are dominated by examinations. Moreover, as development of the right kind of interests, attitudes, and values is not given sufficient emphasis, the curriculum becomes not only out of step but also out of time with the life of the people.

Curriculum is overcrowded. Besides multiplicity of subjects, the contents are neither rich nor significant. Subjects are crowded with too many facts and details, often of little significance and an unwelcome burden on memory. In the words of the Mudaliar Commission, "Our curriculum makers have usually suffered from the besetting sin of the specialist who tries to put as much of his favorite subject-matter as possible into the curriculum and textbooks and is more concerned with the logical and scientific demands of the subject than the needs, the psychology, and the interests of the learner."

It is not adapted to the individual tastes and interests. Differences that take place during the adolescent period of pupils are not taken into consideration. It is on account of differences in tastes and interests that England has a tripartite system of schools--the grammar school, the secondary modern and the secondary technical school. The traditional curriculum does not make provision for diverse tastes and talents.

Curriculum does not provide technical or vocational training. Although it is accepted at all hands that the aim of education is "preparation for life," yet the curriculum adopted in secondary schools is not in conformity with this aim. After finishing his schooling, the pupil has to do one of the multiple jobs of the society. For this, neither his mind is prepared nor his hand trained. In the prevailing curriculum, there is no technical or vocational bias. Now as the country is fast being industrialized, the students must be trained for the new avenues of employment on the technical side. Under the changing economic pattern of the country, mere academic instruction cannot serve the purpose. Practical skills and aptitudes have to be tapped. Skilled workers and technicians will have to be produced. The groundwork of this has to be laid in the secondary schools.

In the words of the Mudaliar Commission, "the present curriculum is out of time with life and fails to prepare students for life. It does not give them a real understanding of life or insight into the world outside the school into which they will have to enter. The starting point for curriculum, therefore, should be the desire to bridge the gulf between the school subjects and the rich and varied activities that make up the warp and woof of life."

In concluding this problem, it might be said that curriculum is not something that is static. It is dynamic. It is a piece of paper until it reaches the classroom. There, it comes alive. It must remain under constant revision in order to adapt to the needs of a continuously changing--and let us hope, constantly improving--society. Hence, a unified

approach should be taken to the framing of the entire school curriculum, a new definition of the content of general education, and a new approach to the place of specialization. Even a little knowledge, acquired pleasantly and thoroughly and with the feeling that it has real significance for us, is better than a great deal of miscellaneous ill-digested knowledge, unrelated to life. The former will quicken interest and open the gateway to continuous learning; the latter may kill curiosity and create disaster for further learning.

The language problem. India has about 230 languages current in the different parts of the country. These different languages have different script and different speech. The existence of these languages creates many problems. Unity of language is one of the most marked features of nationality. The language problem is a burning problem, and it is engaging the best minds of the country.

During the British regime, the English language enjoyed a dominating position. It was the medium of instruction both at the school and college levels. It was considered indispensable for acquiring knowledge and to have an entry to the foreign countries like America and England.

After independence, extremists have demanded that the English language should be completely eliminated. But this was not so easy as they imagined. Some people with more rational thinking suggested that the medium of instruction should be essentially a mother-tongue, and that English should be taught as a foreign language until such period as is considered essential. English can be conveniently used as a secondary language. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the late Prime Minister, in 1929 said, "We cannot leave English

abruptly. English is important because it is the major window for us on the modern world, and we dare not close that window."³

Since the foreign technical and scientific knowledge can be had mainly through English, it was deemed that it should be given a secondary place in the interests of the country.

The language problem assumed a political shape after independence. The people wished a change in the matter of language, and some of the extremists who lived in a linguistic world wanted abolition of English and an introduction of Hindi as its substitute. There were others who desired gradual change in the policy. The tendency of people towards languages was so intense that India was finally divided into linguistic states in 1956 which, in turn, became watertight compartments into which education could not find a way.

Language means a medium through which a set of people talk to each other and comprehend each others' viewpoints; or in more plain words, it is a means of communication between people for discharging daily duties. A common language means lingua-franca for the people of the country irrespective of their religion, caste or creed. India is a sub-continent inhabited by millions of people. It is, therefore, desirable that a common language should be adopted in which the people of different states should be able to converse and correspond. In my view, that common language must be English which encourages a common standard of education which varies a great deal at present.

Problems of Primary Education. It was in the Despatch of 1954 that, for the first time, the importance of mass education was emphasized in

India. Subsequently, at least a dozen times the policy was reiterated, but still the proportion of children of school-going age had not actually reached a figure which could have been expected.⁴ The introduction of universal compulsion is the remedy to make India literate. Illiteracy is more marked among the girls, 'Harijans (untouchables or outcastes) and other depressed classes. Special attention to these can reduce illiteracy.

The primary education in India has been ineffective and uninteresting. Incompetent teaching, dry and dull atmosphere of the schools, and the meager intellectual education and professional training of the teachers are the problems that need to be tackled. Existence of a large number of single-teacher and single-room schools is adversely affecting the effectiveness of primary education. It is true that it is better to have a single-teacher and a single-room school than to have no school at all; but to handle all the four and five classes single-handed, even if he is specially trained in plural teaching, is not conducive to good teaching. And very often this single-teacher is absent from school because there is no one to check him. The village teachers have no headmasters over them, and the inspector visits are very infrequent (once or twice a year). Only when the village officials take an interest in the schools do the teachers come regularly. Such is the case in many of the single-teacher schools of Andhra Pradesh, author's native State where TELUGU is spoken. Another thing is that the untouchability is still dominant in most of the Indian villages. In case the outcaste or the children who belong to the untouchable caste attend the school, they are made to sit at a distance

from the caste children. After finishing their education in the single-teacher school, children are expected to go to a full-fledged primary school in one of the larger villages to complete their primary education. These villages are from one and a half to four miles away. Because of this distance, many children stop going to school. Neither parent takes the initiative of sending them to school. To a great extent, the apathy of the village population towards education is due to their poverty and conservatism. Neither can they afford to spend anything on education nor can they afford to let their children attend the school at a time when their tender limbs can earn something to supplement the income of the family or even when they can lend a helping hand to their parents. Conceded, education is made free, but the parents will have to spend something on supplying reading and writing material for their children and must spend something to send their children at least dressed properly. A majority of the parents cannot even clothe their children properly. One long shirt up to the age of ten is a common spectacle in the villages.

Teacher education. After achieving independence, there has been a good deal of expansion in training schools and colleges. With expansion, numerous problems have arisen which require immediate attention. The standards of training have gone down. There is no planned working of training institutions in the country. The training institutes are ill-staffed and under-staffed. There is no proper student-teacher ratio. The staff members are overloaded with work. Research work is null and void. It has been observed that newly trained teachers often forget what they have learned in training colleges as soon as they join the schools.

They follow the traditional method maybe for convenience or because old hands ridicule them. Preparing teachers of technical, agricultural and artistic subjects, e.g., general science and social studies, has not so far proved easy and is being taken in hand by the regional training colleges which the newly formed National Council for Educational Research and Training (1961) is starting.

Poor material and physical conditions of educational institutions.

With the expansionist policy in education, there has been a phenomenal rise in the number of students in educational institutions. In many cases, the teacher-pupil ratio has risen from 1:25 to 1:70. As against this, there has been no corresponding increase in the staff, accommodation, and equipment. There is a great shortage of playgrounds and stadiums which are essentials for the development of sports and games. It is a pity there are no swimming pools at all in the Indian schools. Hence, the physical and material conditions of educational institutions do not stimulate students to realize their full potentialities.

A few more problems which are a great threat to the development of education in India are mentioned below.

1. Cultural diversity. The people of each state have different cultures. Even people in the urban and rural areas have different habits. Customs of marriage, food habits, and occupations also differ from place to place. These differences impede the development of education.

2. Religious diversity. Religious fanatics are among all communities, and they cause communal disharmony. They exploit the ignorant masses in the name of religion. Religious quarrels arise in many of the educational

institutions, and the religious madness has claimed many precious lives. It was communal frenzy which led to the partition of the country. It is a sort of handicap in the development of education.

3. Provincialism. It is also bred-hatred. One does not feel at home in another province because of the mounting spirit of provincialism. For instance, people of Rajasthan may find it difficult to live honorably in Calcutta. Bengal's provincialism may deter others to settle down in Bengal. Similarly, a Behari may feel awkward in Punjab. This kind of provincialism creates fear among students, and they are reluctant to move from one State to another for higher education.

4. Lack of idealism. There is complete absence of idealism in Indian public activities. It is the backbone of education, and it inspires a person to identify himself with something higher and bigger.

5. Caste. It is a great disruptive tendency which arrests the progress of education. People are very much caste ridden. It widens the gulf between the people of different castes and prevents their coming closer. This caste system is dominant in most of the Indian villages, and it prevents to some extent the villagers from having an education which improves their conditions.

6. Geographical diversity. India, being a big country, has diverse geographical features. People who live in different parts of the country speak different languages, and they have various customs and traditions. Some tribal people who live in intractable hilly areas do not have the opportunity of getting an education which helps to improve their lot.

Chapter V

Similarities and Differences with American Schools

Human nature, with all its infirmities and depravities, is still capable of great things. Education makes a greater difference between man and man, than nature has made between man and brute. The virtues and powers to which men may be trained, by early education and constant discipline, are truly sublime and astonishing.

--John Adams.

The system of education both in the States and India is similar to some extent and different in many other aspects. Even though functions of the education officers are the same, they have different designations. For example, the chief State School Officer in the U. S. A. is equivalent to the State Education Secretary in India. Similarly, the Area School District Superintendent is equivalent to the District Education Officer. The District in the Indian sense is a revenue unit and has hundreds of schools. In an American District, there might be ten to fifteen schools. Or, to put it in another way, in an American State there might be thousands of school districts, but in an Indian State you can count the Districts with your fingers. The one in charge of any school in India is called a headmaster or headmistress, and here in the States he or she is called principal.

Here there is a coeducational system, and in India the coeducational

system is only up to the primary level. There are separate schools for boys and girls up to the secondary level. The school accommodation is very poor in India. Every classroom is crowded. There is no proper furniture, science equipment and playgrounds in many of the Indian schools. In this respect, the United States is far advanced. There are only a limited number of students in every class. And every classroom is equipped with all requirements including a TV set. Not even radio sets are there in Indian classrooms.

The most unique feature of American education is its regulation by a board or committee of local lay citizens, chosen or appointed from those living in the district. The members of the board or committee serve as agents of the State in carrying out a basic function of the State. The school property is owned by the State. And the school program is under control of the State. Despite the operational function performed by any local group, final authority resides in the State, and only there.

In India the schools are not regulated by boards or committees. Education is a "State subject." But after independence, and especially with the beginning of the Five-Year Plans in 1951, the Federal Government began playing a more active role in education, using Federal finances as a leverage. ¹ But it must be remembered that because education in India is almost entirely government-controlled, political pressures operate upon it at one level or another.

In most of the Indian States the school year begins in June and ends in April. We work in India for six days a week. This means that

there is only a one-day weekend which is Sunday. Further, there is no semester system, but the academic year is divided into three terms. The duration of each term is between three to four months. Here in the States the school year begins in September and ends by the first week in June. And there is a semester system here.

In India the elementary education is divided into two sections--lower primary and upper primary. All the single-teacher schools in India are lower primary schools in which the classes run from 1st to 4th grades. The upper primary school is called a full-fledged primary school in which the classes run from 1st to 7th grades. At the end of seven years' primary education, there is a districtwise public examination. From 8th grade to 10th grade it is called high school or secondary school. At the end of this ten-year schooling, there is a statewide public examination.

In India, the examinations are given to find out what the student does not know, while in America they are used to discover what he knows. Examiners in India seem to take sadistic pleasure in failing their students, and in many instances, the examiner who scuttles the most students is considered the best of the lot. In fact, government education means examination.

Here in the States it appears that the elementary and high school education is divided into various stages in different schools. I give the examples of two, three-types of schools: Kindergarten and 1st to 4th grades is deemed as primary school, 5th to 8th grades, middle school, and 9th to 12th grades, high school. In the second type, 1st to 5th

grades is elementary school, 6th to 8th grades, middle school, and 9th to 12th grades, high school. In the third type, kindergarten and 1st to 6th grades is elementary school, 7th to 9th grade, junior high school, and from 10th to 12th grades, senior high school.

As for the curriculum observed, there is a great difference between the two systems of education. In India only six main courses (subjects) are taught throughout the year. They are: three languages and three non-language subjects. The three languages are mother-tongue or regional languages, Hindi, the national language, and English as the international language. The three non-language subjects are mathematics, social studies, and general science. Besides these subjects; weekly, one or two periods are allotted for teaching physical education, crafts and art. Music is not taught at all in most of the Indian schools.

In the United States, I notice the following subjects or courses are taught in the middle and high schools. I copy the courses from the progress reports of two girls who are students at St. Marys Area School District, St. Marys, PA. One is in eighth grade and the other is in eleventh grade. Eighth grade subjects are Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Reading, Physical Education, Music, Home Economics, Health, German, Algebra 1 and Industrial Arts. Eleventh grade subjects include: Africa and M. E., Food Services, American Literature, Driver Training-Drive Ind., China, Japan, Korea, Child Care, Physical Education, Chorus, Advanced Composition, P.S.S.C., Study Program and Analysis 1.

Krishnalal Shridharani, in his book; My India, My America, says that during his first semester in the States, he discovered that the girl

was as much a part of the campus as the boy. He was convinced that American girls are really and vitally a part of the college and all its activities, while Indian girls in the coeducational schools are still having difficulty raising their eyes above their sandals. Further, he says that an Indian student in an American university is apt to miss his hard-and-fast textbook, for the entire British system of education in India is ruled by the tradition of textbook parrotry.²

A couple of sentences about the salaries of teachers in India: The bulk of taxes comes from land revenue and beverages. Beverages in the Indian sense include hot toddy, a white drink which comes from palm trees which are very tall and are found in tropical countries. The majority of villagers drink this toddy and bear the lion's share of Government expenditure. No Government employee or the employees who work in industries or private firms ever pay any taxes from their salaries. Here in the States, the tax is deducted from every pay check irrespective of its category.

John Dewey influenced American education so much that there is perfect happiness and friendliness between teachers and pupils. In the schools of America respect for the dignity of the individual, freedom and equality, have become real. Freedom and responsibility have been coupled.³ In India, it is completely the opposite. The teacher is a terror to the pupils. He never respects the dignity of individuals. "Children are often afraid to go to school as there is no friendliness and warmth between teachers and pupils.

Chapter VI

Summary and Conclusion

I have come to the last stage of my short journey, to the end of my short American pilgrimage, and I feel like staying for another year at the lovely campus of Bucknell, but the chances are very dim. A British friend of mine, who is a teacher in Teheran, Iran, writes me in the following way. I quote some sentences from his letter dated October 14, 1974.

I realize the Indian way of life has a fascination for us in the West. Rejoice in the fact that amongst millions you have had a chance to have a taste of life in America.... I do hope you manage to stick to the course there. Try to make friends and learn as much as you can about the country and its people. You will find, too, that most young Americans and many older ones are fascinated about India, and a true expose of life and conditions there will interest them. I expect you will be asked a lot about your country. I hope you will not run it down. It may be poor, overcrowded, and underfed, but I think it is a wonderful place to live.

My British friend suggests that I do not run down my country. I tried to ~~give~~ a glimpse of the true picture of the educational system in India.

In his book, Building the City of Man, W. Warren Wagar suggests that at least half the work of the coming world civilization will consist of education. This means that the world citizenry will devote at least half of its active hours to learning. The preeminence of education as an instrument of modernization is widely assumed in the contemporary literature on the so-called traditional societies or developing nations. Thus, we are advised that, "the progress of modernization will ... be directly related to the pace of educational advance; and the one

sure way to modernize quickly is to spread education, to produce educated² and skilled citizens and train an adequate and competent intelligentsia.

According to Lloyd Morrisett, one of the founders of Sesame Street, "After the invention of the printing press in 1456, it took hundreds of years for the tradition of print to be fully allied with that of verbal instruction. We cannot afford so gradual a change in human habit." Morrisett's stress on the urgency of harnessing the electronics' revolution for educational purposes is appropriate. Seeing the colossal task of educating the Indian masses, Lester R. Brown, in his book, World Without Borders, says that this breakthrough in educational programming for television purposes, combined with new possibilities for broadcasting from telecommunications, satellites, etc., opens some exciting horizons in education. Further, he says that UNESCO's experts saw great potential in the satellite as the most economic means for quickly raising the educational level of the Indian population which is 70 percent illiterate. The satellite system could achieve automatic television coverage as quickly as each of the 570,000 villages in India could be provided with a television receiver. While many villages would be large enough to justify more than one community set, a single receiver is considered adequate as a first step. With 40 percent of the population under fifteen years of age, primary education, in particular, should receive a major boost. The UNESCO mission believed that widespread use of television would accelerate the enrollment rate and supplement the schools' limited curricula. Even those villages without schools would benefit, for if television sets and teaching assistants were made available to them, their

children could obtain at least a fundamental education during the intervening period before schools were built and staffed.³

Another major crisis is the general one of educational quality. The indiscriminate expansion of educational institutions without adequate facilities or resources, and the progressively lower standards expected from students and teachers alike, have resulted in a devaluation of the entire educational effort. The fifth plan is trying to stem this rot by making it national policy to control the expansion and by introducing a number of programs to improve quality.⁴

A mere increase in literacy and in modern educational institutions in a country such as India could be regarded as a sufficient condition of the modernization of the educational system as a whole. Similarly, reservations have been expressed regarding the effectiveness of the programs of educational expansion in some other developing countries, and the widespread view of education as "a magic medicine that can by itself transform a society," or as "the master determinant of all aspects of change," is now being questioned. It has been found that modern education in developing countries has not always succeeded in playing the same role in social and occupational mobility and in the emergence of a less rigid system of social stratification as it has in the Western countries.⁵

A couple of sentences about Indian economy: India is a very poor nation. Its poverty spreads throughout almost the entire population. The average income in India is \$80 a year. A few Indians have great wealth. Many Indians live on 5 cents or less a day. These people feel

lucky to have enough food to stay alive, and any kind of shelter for sleeping. Their clothing consists of one or two pieces of new cloth a year.

A couple of words about me: Of all the Indians who ever visited the United States of America, I am the poorest guy. My parents are illiterate, and they live in a hut of mud and straw in which there is no running water nor electricity nor telephone. They are completely ignorant of modern civilization.

Originally, I was assigned to write this essay after I return to India, but I wanted to do it before I leave this campus. Within a short period, I tried my level best to give a few glimpses about the system of education in India. This short essay gives insufficient information to the reader. Hence, I advise him to read the books which are available in the library. In our own library, there are many books on India, its poverty, education, illiteracy and untouchability.

Finally, I conclude this with a poem written by the Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, who was a Nobel Prize winner.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by
 narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depth of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
 Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into
 the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward by Thee into everwidening
 thought and action;
 Into that heaven of freedom let my country awake.

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