CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL COMPETENCE AS GOAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
(Survey of Policy-making Literature)
Reports of the Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education (1953) highlighted the importance of developing social competence in the formative years of life in children in secondary schools. The deliberations in the said Report admitted competence as the most desirable quality in a high school child. Education Commission Report (1966) expanded the concept of competence and included there the issue of Social Competence. The National Policy of Education (1986) also emphasized on the development of Social Competence. According to the National Policy of Education Report (1986) — education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitiveness and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit, thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution. Revised National Policy on Education (1992) put emphasis on national system of education which will be based on a national curricular framework. It included such elements as India's common cultural heritage, egalitarian democracy and secularism, protection of the environment and removal of social barriers thus expanding the concept of Social Competence.

Contribution of Social Competence in a student's life goes beyond the range of mere scholastic efficiency. It helps the students to become capable of acquiring social skills and utilizing them profitably for solving problems in the reality intelligently for attaining social accomplishment (Ford, 1982; Wentzel et al, 1990).

3.1. Mudaliar Commission of Secondary Education (1953):

Dr. Luxmana Swami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor, Madras University, was the Chairman of the Committee.

Suggested Aims of Secondary Education:

Secondary Education in India which adopted the ideal of secular democracy should have the following objectives:

(a) Development of ideal democratic citizens of the Sovereign Republic of India.
(b) Development of pupil's personality, so that they may appreciate their cultural heritage and acquire interest in constructive work and become full fledged men.

(c) Character development of the youth and adolescent.

(d) Secondary Education should prepare the pupils for middle grade leadership in social, political, cultural and industrial life necessary for the nation's advancement.

(e) Impartation of vocational capacity and skill according to individual aptitude.

(f) Together with patriotism, students should be imbued with the ideal of world brotherhood of men.

With these objectives the Commission proposed self contained and complete secondary education upto 17+. Such education would be (i) preparatory for those who would proceed to the university and (ii) terminal and life oriented for those who would join life's vocations.

Curriculum - The Commission made extensive recommendations on curricular reorganization, viz.—

(i) Curriculum for the lower secondary stage would be undiversified, general and common for all children and would consist of (a) English, (b) Mother Tongue, (c) Mathematics, (d) General Science, (e) Social Studies, (f) Craft, (g) Physical Education, Art, Music etc.

(ii) Curriculum for higher secondary stage would meet the needs for (a) Social integration on the one hand and (b) Individual specialization on the other.

Core subjects would contribute to social integration and cultural upliftment through common general education. And peripheral subjects based upon elective principles would foster individual bias for professional-vocational skill.
Other recommendations of the Commission were —

(a) A three language formula with State language, Regional language and English.

(b) Combination of theory and practice in the educative process.

(c) Adoption of dynamic methods to make self-contained and terminal secondary education really effective, meaningful and worthy.

(d) Reform of examination to make it a real evaluation and thereby reduce university-mindedness.

(e) Guidance and counselling system to select students for the different streams.

(f) Health and welfare services for students.

(g) Application of the principle of correlation in the presentation of different subjects.

(h) Extensive co-curricular activities to foster creativity, character formation and socialisation of children.

(i) Better emoluments, better terms of service and better teacher-preparation to ensure a supply of better teachers for the higher secondary classes.

(j) Formation of a Board of Secondary Education for each State with 25 members.

Some other recommendations were —

(1) Selection of Textbooks:

A high powered committee for selecting textbooks should be constituted at the State level.
(2) Method of Teaching:

Teaching should not impart knowledge only, but also inculcate desirable values. Emphasis should be shifted from verbalism and memorization to learning through purposeful, concrete, realistic situations. Emphasis should be placed upon clear thinking and expression. Students should be trained to acquire the qualities of group life and cooperative work.

(3) Religious and Moral Instruction:

Education of character should be a responsibility of the teacher. Personal contact should ensure discipline. Co-curricular activities should form a part of education. School Self-Govt. should be fostered. N.C.C., Junior Red Cross etc. should be encouraged.

(4) Examination:

There might be two external examinations at the end of Class X and at the end of Class XII; objective test should be emphasized. Cumulative Records should be maintained with due credit for weekly or monthly tests.

(5) Guidance and Counselling:

Selection of streams would necessitate guidance of experts. Hence, trained Guidance Officers and Career Masters should be appointed in Secondary Schools.

(6) Welfare of Students:

All students should be medically examined every year. School Medical Services should be organized. Teachers should be given first aid training and physical training. School tiffin or mid-day meal for students should be provided. Complete record of physical activities of every student should be maintained.

(7) Teacher Training:

Two types of institutions should be constructed for one year, and for two year training. Refresher Course should be extensively organized. Training colleges should conduct researches.
(8) Better Terms for Teachers:

The Commission admitted that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction was the teacher.

3.2. Education Commission (1966) (Kothari Commission):

The Kothari Commission was given the charge of studying all the stages and types of education and to suggest measures for the attainment of a National System of Education.

The Commission headed by Dr. D.S. Kothari and constituted of expertise from India and the advanced countries made its recommendations keeping in view the facts that India (a) adopted the ideal of secular democracy, (b) was committed to eradication of illiteracy, (c) stood for rapid development of agriculture and industries, (d) adopted modern science and technology, (e) established a socialist pattern of society based upon equal opportunities.

The Commission defined the objectives to be achieved through a system of education, as —

1. Increase in production.
2. Social and national integration.
3. Establishment of democratic principles and practices.
4. Modernisation of India.
5. Character building through inculcation of social, moral and spiritual values.

The aims of secondary education would be to provide a solid basis of general education for democratic citizenship, on the basis of which education the individual would be able to become competent in availing of opportunities for (i) higher education, (ii) education for specialization, (iii) various forms of technical and vocational education, and (iv) employment for quality life.

In the matter of social service special emphasis would be placed upon Community Development Work. Compulsory Social Work for ten days per year or consolidated
30 days for the 3 years on lower secondary stage would be insisted upon. Wood work, Metal work, Tailoring, Printing etc. should feature in work experience programme. The objective of Higher Secondary Education should be to enlarge and strengthen the foundation of general education together with an orientation to specialization.

The curriculum would consist of two languages — English and mother tongue and three elective subjects. Work experience should be provided in fields and at least \( \frac{1}{2} \) of the time should be devoted to co-curricular activities.

3.3. The National Policy of Education, 1986:

Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times.

India has reached a stage in its economic and technical development when a major effort must be made to drive the maximum benefit from the assets already created. It must also be ensured that the fruits of change reach all sections of the people. With this aim in view, a comprehensive appraisal of the existing educational scene was made.

The Essence and Role of Education:

In our national perception, education is essentially for all. This is fundamental to our all-round development — material and spiritual.

Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit, thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution.

Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. It is also the substratum on which research and development flourish, that being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance.

(i) National System of Education:

The Indian Constitution embodies the principles on which National System of Education is conceived. Upto a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex will have access to education of a comparable quality.
The National System of Education will be based on a national curriculum framework. Education will strengthen international understanding; competence for achieving excellence; help maintaining peaceful co-existence; and promote equality.

(ii) Education for Equality:

The new policy will lay emphasis on the removal of disparities and equalisation of opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far.

Suitable incentives will be provided to all educationally backward sections of society. The objective should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners.

Systematic programmes of adult education linked with national goals such as eradication of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, energisation of the culture and creativity of the people, observation of small family norm, promotion of women's equality etc. will be organized and the existing programmes reviewed and strengthened.

(iii) Reorganization of Education at Different Levels:

(a) Early Child Care and Education:

The National Policy on children specially emphasises investment in the development of a young child. Recognising the holistic nature of child development, viz., nutrition, health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development, early childhood care and education will receive high priority.

(b) Non-Formal Education:

A large and systematic programme of non-formal education will be launched for school drop-outs, for children from habitations without schools, working children and girls who cannot attend whole-day schools.

(c) Secondary Education:

This is an appropriate stage to provide children with a sense of history and national perspective and give them opportunities to understand their constitutional
duties and rights as citizen, conscious internalisation of a healthy work-ethos and values of a human and composite culture will be brought about through appropriately formulated curricula.

(d) Vocationalisation:

The introduction of systematic, well planned and vigorously implemented programmes of vocational education is crucial in the educational reorganisation.

(e) Higher Education:

Being at the apex of the educational pyramid, it has a key role in producing teachers for the education system.

(f) Open University and Distance:

The open university system is an instrument of democratising the system of education.

(g) Educational Content:

The curricula and processes of education will be enriched by cultural content in as many manifestations as possible.

(h) Value Education:

The growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values. In a culturally pluralistic society like ours, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help to eliminate coercive forces like obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism.

(i) Books and Libraries:

The availability of books at low prices is indispensable for people's education. Measures will be taken to improve the quality of books, promote the reading habit and encourage creative writing.
(j) Media and Educational Technology:

Educational Technology will be employed in the spread of useful information and training and re-training of teachers, to improve quality, sharpen awareness of art and culture, inculcate abiding values etc. both in the formal and non-formal sectors of education.

(k) Teachers:

The status of the teacher reflects the sociocultural-ethos of a society. It is said that no people can rise above the level of their teachers.

(l) Teacher Education:

The system of teacher education will be overhauled. The new programmes of teacher education will emphasise continuing education and the need for teachers to meet the thrust envisaged in this policy.

(m) Resources and Review:

Development oriented objective of Indian society can be realised only by making investments in education of an order commensurate with the mature and dimensions of the task. The Government will find funds for such programmes as — universalisation of elementary education, liquidating illiteracy, equality of access to educational opportunities to all sections of the community, enhancing the social relevance, quality and functional effectiveness of educational programmes, contributive to the development of good citizenship and social competence.

3.3.1. Review of National Policy of Education Ramamurti Committee (1990):

The Ramamurti Committee (1990) forwarded an outline for reorientation. The Committee has considered the contemporary educational problems. Majority of Indian population lying below the poverty line, educational planning must necessarily be integrated with socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. The proposal submitted alteration of the NPE 1986, include the following considerations:

(1) Education must be reviewed as a comprehensive whole. Man's liberal, socio-cultural and aesthetic aspects must be developed for level-wise educational progress.
(2) The doors of school education must remain open according to an equal opportunity of access thus making education available to each citizen, as an universal opportunity.

(3) An educational complex is to be organised in an area following integration of different institutions at different levels.

(4) In order to effect social and national integration, a common school system covering a span of ten years must be launched.

(5) Problem solving skill and creativity must find expression as components of competence in all levels of education.

(6) Post-literacy books must be published holding not only the story element, but also for infusing traditional values and ideals of the country, helpful to regard national heritage.

(7) Our country prides itself for its heritage of socio-cultural diversity. Yet, there exists an unity amidst this diversity — this realisation must be instilled in students for developing skills and competence to live in democratic society.

(8) Voluntary organisations and activist groups must render social service such that social progress is fostered by upholding spirit of cooperation and developing attitude to recognise others' right, role and dignity — as components of mainstream of population.

The aim of the present study will be to ascertain how far the expectations of the Indian educationists expressed in different Education Commission Reports and in the National Education Policy are attained up till now in reality.

3.4. Survey of Relevant Research Literature:

The development of citizenship skills, conformity to social rules and norms, co-operative and positive styles of social interaction has been a traditional and valued objective for school (Dreben, 1968; Jackson, 1968; Wentzel, 1989). These social outcomes are promoted by classroom rules that discourage students from
A prominent but understudied premises in the peer relations literature is that friendship affects children's development and adjustment (Berndt and Ladd, 1989). This premise is based on the perspective that beyond the contributions of other socializers (e.g., parents, teachers) friends make substantial and possibly unique contributions to children's development. Hartup and Sanchilio (1986) for example, contend that friendships provide children with (1) a context for skill learning and development, (2) emotional and cognitive resources and (3) models for later relationships.

Recently investigators have elaborated upon this perspective by distinguishing conceptually among differing aspects of friendship. Bukowski and Hoza (1989) for example, propose a model in which they identify three different aspects or indicators of friendship — (1) presence or absence of friendship (i.e., whether a child is a participant in a mutually reciprocated friendship with a peer or not), (2) number of friendships (i.e., extensity of child's friendship network) and (3) quality of friendship (e.g., features of other dyadic relationship such as the level of support, companionship or conflict it provides for the child).
Thus for investigators who have examined the linkage between friendship and adjustment have tended to employ measures that correspond to the first and second indicators in Bukowski and Hoza's model.

Research on friendship quality is at an early stage; investigators' initial efforts have been focussed on construction, specification and measurement (i.e., identifying and reliably measuring important friendship features). A review of existing measures show that investigators have targeted a number of relational processes or provisions as indicators of friendship quality. Included among the features, investigators have attempted to measure with grade, school children and adolescents at play, prosocial behaviour, intimacy (Furman and Buhrmester, 1985); companion security, conflict, help and closeness (Bukowski, Boivin and Hoza, 1991); validation and earning, help, companionship and recreation, intimate exchange, conflict betrayal, conflict resolution (Parker and Asher, 1993). Bukowski and Hoza (1990) have shown that during pre-adolescent years, specific friendship provisions such as security and closeness forecast later affective outcomes such as loneliness.

Eisenberg and Fabes (1991) have studied the relation between prosocial behaviour and empathy-related characteristics. Beginning in late elementary school or thereafter, children begin to express reasoning reflecting abstract principles, internalized affective reactions and self reflective sympathy and perspective taking.

The social contexts in which children are establishing their peer relationships may affect both children's behaviour towards their peers and how it is interpreted (Ladd and Price, 1993). The social environment is particularly germane to efforts to promote children's social adjustment (Ladd, Price and Hart, 1990) because it may influence the effectiveness of particular interventions.

While cooperative group work expedites learning it is apparent that children learn better under certain conditions. For example, researchers have become aware of the need to examine group composition in order to determine its effect on interactions and achievement. A number of studies have examined the relationship between giving help and meeting academic goals in small groups (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Baird and Webb, 1984; Peterson and Janicki, 1979; Peterson, Janicki and Swing, 1981). Webb (1985) found that high ability students gave more help to their peers in mixed
ability groups than they did in uniform ability group. Conversely, medium ability students gave and received more explanations in uniform ability groups than they did in mixed ability groups.

Hess, W. Darrell and Winston, Roger, B. (1995) examined the relationship between intentions to participate in activities that would enhance psychosocial development and the level of psychosocial development in that domain. It was found that students showed a preference for developmental activities outside their residence.

Berndt, Thomas J. and Keefe Keunho (1995) examined the influence of friends' behaviours and the features of their friendships on 7th and 8th graders and found a positive relationship between friend's influence or adolescents adjustment to school.

Ladd Garry W. and Kochenderfer, Becky, J. (1996) explored the potential contributions that children's peer relationships specially friendships make to children's adjustment during their transition to grade school. They studied 3 forms of classroom peer relationships, i.e., friendships, acquaintanceships and peer group acceptance. They found that peer relationship influenced children's adjustment in both academic life and social life.

Synder, James, West, Lisa, Stockemer, Vanessa, Gibbons, Shannon et al (1996) examined the social processes used by 74 African American children to choose peer affiliates in a natural classroom setting and found that strong mutual affiliations or friendships were established between children who proved each other with the highest levels of positive social consequences available from peers in the classroom.

Monteil (1988) found that public evaluation (from peers and teachers) of one's personal academic skills or abilities increased high achievers and decreased low achievers actual classroom performance under conditions like forced social comparison etc.

Maag, John W. (1994) concluded that there is a link between academic learning and social behaviour.
Kudrek, Lawrence A., Fine, Mark A. and Sinclair, Ronald J. (1995) found that school adjustment was related to number of parenting transitions, family climate and peer norms as well as to higher order relations involving family climate and peer norms (Ladd and Kochenderfer, Becky, J., 1996).

Ladd, Garry, W. and Coleman Cyntheia (1997) found a positive relationship between peer relationship and academic achievement.

O'Donnell, Angela M. and Topping Keith (1998) studied the relationship between peer acceptance and academic achievement and found a positive correlation between peer acceptance and academic achievement.

Newmann, Fred M. (1998) presented a model showing relationship among various factors contributing to academic achievement. Those factors are social support, school leadership and structural support.

Abrami and Chamber (1996) found that cooperative learning is helpful in goal achievement. Similar findings have been reported by Ryan, Allison, Pintrich and Paul (1998).

Cherian Varghese and Cherian Lily (1996) studied the relationship of parents' attitudes towards teachers, schools and education and found a positive relationship between parents' attitudes and their children's academic achievement. Similar findings have been reported by Chen, Huabin and Lan, William (1998) who conducted their study on American and Chinese adolescents.

A model of self concept has been proposed by Marsh, Herbert, Craver, Rhonda (1997) after finding a positive relationship between academic achievement and school adjustment.

Vandell and Hembree (1994), Urdan Timothy (1997) found that peer social status and friendship were also related to academic adjustment.
On the basis of facts reported so far an outline plan for the present study was developed and submitted to the Ph.D. Committee of Applied Psychology, Calcutta University, for approval.