CHAPTER II

ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

This chapter is intended to examine, in brief, the history of people's participation in the development of education in Nepal. It is examined in view of the geographical, socio-economic and political environment of the country.

I. THE ENVIRONMENT OF PARTICIPATION

The Physical Setting

The kingdom of Nepal - an independent home-land of about 15 million people - covers a total land area of 1,47,181 square kilometres.¹ This tiny Himalayan state is a land-locked country sandwiched between two giant neighbours - China and India - like a yam between two boulders, and shares common borders with China on the north, and with India on the east, west and south. It is rectangular in shape with an average of 880 kilometres in length and 160 kilometres in breadth.²

On the basis of altitude, the country is divided into three natural regions - Mountains, Hills and Terai. Altitudinally arranged as they are, these geographical regions roughly correspond to three different ecological zones of the land.\(^3\) Owing to high altitude and wild terrain, the northern mountainous region is a marginal area of human occupancy. The hills region extending along the central belt of the country is characterized by numerous rivers, streams and valleys and accounts for about 68 per cent of Nepal's total land area. In complete contrast to the rugged topography of the Mountains and Hills, the Terai of Nepal forms a low land belt stretched along the southern fringe occupying about 17 per cent of total land area.\(^4\) Nepal's mountainous topography is related to its climatic variations which can be broadly categorized into three types - the alpine climate, the temperate climate and the subtropical climate.\(^5\) The three geographical regions roughly correspond to these climatic variants.

This physical structure of the country coupled with her land-locked position has significant effects on the socio-economic and political life of the people and also on the pace of educational modernization and national development.

The Demographic and Socio-Cultural Setting

Nepal's population has been rising tremendously during the

3. Ibid., p. 35.
last few decades. It is reported that it rose from 6.23 million in 1941 to 11.85 million in 1971 with nearly 84 per cent increase in a period of 30 years. The 1981 census data do not indicate any sign of decline in the rate of population growth.

The physio-geographical make-up of the country has caused extremely irregular distribution of population. The mountainous and hilly regions comprising 85 per cent of the total land area are inhabited by about 50 per cent of the population with an average density of 80 persons per square kilometre. The narrow tarai belt covering only 17 per cent of the area accounts for about 40 per cent of the population with an average density of 216 persons per square kilometer.7

Another important feature of Nepal is that about 96 per cent of its population lies in rural areas comprising small communities of about 30,000 villages with an average of 380 inhabitants per village.8

Nepal has a great socio-cultural and ethnic heterogeneity. Considering the complexity and diversity of Nepal's population, at least three major racial groups have been discerned. The Indo-Aryan migrants entered the country from the plains and hills of northern India at different periods in the past. Of them,

numerically, socially and politically most influential castes groups are the Khatriyas and Brahmanas. The occupational castes such as Demai, Kami, Lohan, etc. of the Harijans, although a part of the Indo-Aryan race, have been enslaved by the caste Hindus. The major communities belonging to the Mongolian race are Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Tamang, Lepcha, Thakali and Bhote. The third ethnic group comprising the tribals like Tharus and Dhimals has been considered as the remnant of indigene communities whose habitation of Nepal predates the advent of Indo-Aryan and Mongolian elements. The Indo-Aryan groups are spread throughout the length and breadth of Nepal. The Mongolian ethnic groups inhabit mostly in the central and northern hills bordering the Himalayas. The far western hilly region has a very negligible population of the Mongolian race. As a result of the prolonged contiguity among various communities in the middle hills the ethnic structure in Nepal has become a profuse admixture of the Indo-Aryan and Mongolian strains. The Tharus and other minority groups of the Tarai have recently come under the influence of the dominant castes groups.


Caste system is prevalent mostly among the Indo-Aryan communities which also form the largest and most influential cultural group in the country. Caste is the chief basis of social stratification with Brahmins at the top, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas in the middle and the Harijans and tribals at the bottom of the hierarchy. Although the caste system was sought to be modified in 1964 by the Muluki Ain (Civil Code), it continues to govern people's attitudes, values, and relationships, particularly in the rural areas. Kinship provides the strongest ties. The joint family system is still prevalent. These things with their economic and psychological implications have been a hindrance to geographical mobility.

Almost all social communities of Nepal have their own cultural traditions. However, the geopolitical reality of the country has produced to a large extent a unique cultural blend. Most Hindu festivals are uniformly observed by all people irrespective of their caste and ethnic origins.

Hinduism is widely observed in Nepal, but it has not been free from Buddhist influences. Many of the Mongolian communities

14. Dor Bahadur Bist, "The People" (pp. 35-45), Nepal in Perspective, op. cit., p. 42.
15. The 1971 Census data showed 89.4 per cent Hindus, 7.5 per cent Buddhists, and 3 per cent Muslims in Nepal. See The Analysis of Population Statistics of Nepal, op. cit., p. 42.
have gradually adopted Hindu social and ritual practices.\textsuperscript{17}

Although religious and cultural influences from India have been instrumental in defining the characteristics of contemporary Nepalese society, yet it would be inaccurate to consider that the Hinduism practised in Nepal is a copy of the Indian Hindu religion.\textsuperscript{18}

Nepal is a multi-lingual country. According to 1971 Census,\textsuperscript{19}

the languages spoken by more than 1 per cent people, in order of the number of persons speaking that language, were Nepali, Maithili, Bhopuri, Tamang, Avadhi, Tharu, Newari, Magar, Rai, Gurung, and Limbu. Nepali as a mother tongue was spoken by more than half (52.4\% per cent) of the population. It has been observed that most people of the country can speak and understand Nepali which is the national as well as the official language.

\textbf{The Politico-Administrative Setting}

Nepal is a sovereign independent Hindu kingdom governed by a hereditary monarchical system of democracy. It never lost its de jure independence. Nepal's political history covers the periods of the small principalities upto the unification in 1768, royal supremacy from 1769 to 1846, Rana autocracy from 1846 to 1950, governments under royal tutelage from 1951 to 1959, parliamentary democracy from 1959 to 1960, and the Panchayat democracy under the royal leadership since 1961.

\textsuperscript{17} Bist, op. cit., p. 40.
\textsuperscript{18} Joshi and Rose, op. cit., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{19} The Analysis of the population Statistics of Nepal, op. cit., P. 44.
Before unification, the country was divided into a multiplicity of small principalities known as Raisa and Chowkote (the 22 and 24 local states) ruled by feudal lords and tribal chieftains. The national unification began with the rise of the Gorkhas under the leadership of Prithivi Narayan Shah who conquered the small principalities and laid the foundation of the Kingdom of Nepal in 1768. His successors extended the territories far and wide - to Tista on the east and Kangra on the west. After confrontations at several places with the British power in India, a peace treaty was signed which settled the boundaries of Nepal between Naichi in the east and Mahakali in the west. The subsequent intrigues in the royal court set the stage for the meteoric rise of Jung Bahadur Rana in 1846. The century long Rana family rule dragged the country into a state of ignorance, poverty and isolation. The post great war developments, particularly in the Indian subcontinent, paved the way for national political upsurge in Nepal and heralded the emergence of a monarchical democratic set up in 1951, and Nepal entered the age of modernization.

20. Surya Bikram Dewagi, "Political History" (pp. 47-63), Nepal in Perspective, op. cit., p. 47.
22. Ibid., p. 60.
The post-democracy decade in Nepal is characterized by a succession of experiments towards establishing a political order in the country. The constitution of 1959 provided for a multi-party system of parliamentary democracy under which the first general election was held. The elected government of Nepali Congress Party could not remain in office for long because the king abrogated the constitution and dissolved the parliament in 1960.25 This major political change made a transfer of power from the people to the king and reestablished absolute monarchy in the country.

The constitution of 1962 introduced the Panchayat system of polity. Basically, the panchayat system provided for a network of panchayats throughout the country in which the village panchayat lay at the bottom, the district panchayat in the middle and the national panchayat at the apex of the organization.26 Elections to each tier of the Panchayat bodies were envisaged through an electoral college consisting of a few representatives at each level.

From the very inception, the panchayat system has encountered a series of ordeals in the face of mounting opposition both from inside and outside. Many attempts have been made to revamp the whole system. The second amendment of the panchayat constitution in 1975 was a similar attempt. But this was seriously resented by the people which ultimately led to the historic referendum of 1980.


After the victory of the panchayat system over the multi-party system, the third amendment of the constitution amalgamated three significant changes. According to the first provision, elections for all panchayat bodies are to be held through direct popular franchise. Second, the prime minister is to be elected by the national panchayat. Third, the council of ministers is to be responsible towards the national panchayat.  

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 14 zones and 75 districts. The district is the basic administrative unit which is headed by chief district officer. The zonal commissioners are appointed by the king and are responsible mostly for supervisory functions in maintaining law and order and bringing in coordination in the activities of different district administrators under their purview. In order to remove regional imbalances, the country is divided into five development regions with directorates installed in each regional headquarter. They are held responsible for the implementation of the development programmes and policies of their respective ministries through district administration.

The Economic Setting

Nepal's mountainous topography and related climatic variations have produced three distinctive types of traditional agricultural economies in the Mountain, Hills and the Terai regions.

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The cold and sparsely populated mountain region, with a pastoral economy based on cattle farming, supports less than 10 per cent of the population. The Hills represent the cultural heartland of Nepal. More than half of Nepal's populace lives in the Hills.

The major produce of this region are paddy, wheat, millet and maize which are grown on intensively cultivated terraced fields extending from semi tropical river valleys to alpine ridges. Lack of modern transportation facilities has discouraged the development of industrial activities in the Hills. The essential commodities such as cloth, kerosene, salt and other consumer goods are transported from the Tarai either by human porters or on mule and sheep. With the development of modern transportation facilities the situation is, however, changing.

The Tarai flat land with its rich alluvial social and abundant forest resources has developed an export-oriented rice growing economy which supports about 40 per cent of Nepal's population. The Tarai's abundance of resources has attracted many people of the Hills in the past. But the successive drought spells and the eradication of the malarial scourge has resulted in a large scale migration from the Hills to the Tarai in the recent past.

Many of the forests of the Tarai belt have since yielded to the


32. Bist, op. cit., p. 44.
axes of the migrants who illegally cleared the forests for their settlements and exploited the forest resources in the wildest manner creating serious hazards for the primitive agricultural economy of the region.\textsuperscript{35} Despite quite a few efforts of establishing commercial and industrial operations in some towns, agriculture remains to be the major source of livelihood in the Tarai.

In an underdeveloped economy like Nepal, mass poverty is a commonplace phenomenon. According to a study made by the UN in 1974, Nepal along with 23 other countries was identified as the least developed country in the world.\textsuperscript{36} Studies at home also paint a sorry picture. The national average net family income of rural Nepal for the year 1977 has been reported to be न०.5569 (US $ 464) of which 64.33 per cent was the income from agriculture.\textsuperscript{37} It confirms that the economy of Nepal is predominantly agricultural. In the same year, the average per capita annual income of rural Nepal was न०. 950 with न०.782, न०.932 and न०.1003 in Mountains, Hills and Tarai respectively.\textsuperscript{38} The average income was found varying not only along geographical regions but also along development regions such that the Far Western Development Region was the least developed.\textsuperscript{39} The figures also revealed that while 75.41 per cent of the

\textsuperscript{33} Gage, op. cit., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{34} Pierre Blaikie, John Cameron, and David Seddon, Nepal in Crisis: Growth and Stagnation at the Periphery, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 4-6.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.,
income was expended in foodstuffs, it was only a mere 1.6% per cent in the case of education and health care. The per capita expenditures in Mountains, Hills and Tarai regions were reported to be $364, $969, $915 respectively. If per capita income figures are compared with expenditure in their respective regions, it becomes evident that the whole economy survives only on the bounty of the Tarai. Even then, the income distribution was highly heterogeneous. Half of the national income was earned by an estimated 13 per cent of the population, the wealthiest 3 per cent earned more than one-fourth of the total. Thus, all available evidence suggests that despite ostensibly planned and sustained efforts since long, a vast majority of population has remained entangled with problems of bare livelihood inherent in a subsistance economy.

The Educational Setting

Education was associated with Gurukula and Vihara in ancient Nepal. The last vestiges of indigenous education persisted until the middle of the nineteenth century when English system of education was introduced in the country. But the process of educational modernization started only after the advent of democracy in 1951. Of the many efforts towards modernization of education, the most important was the implementation of the National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971.

38. Ibid., p. 25.
40. Rose and Scholz, op. cit., pp. 94-95.
Since then, Nepal has made remarkable progress in education. Primary school enrolments have reached from 0.9 per cent to 90.4 per cent in 1951-60. Similarly, the number of educational institutions have also considerably increased in the same period. Table 2.1 clearly depicts the growth spurt during the last three decades (1951-60).

Table 2.1
Development of Education in 1951-60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of Institutions</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>4001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>4190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1. Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yojana (2028-32), p. 3.


At present, primary education facilities are available free of cost in each village panchayat. Secondary education is vocationalized. Higher education is organized into an extensive network of campuses under the Tribhuvan University.
Inspeit of these advancements, education has still not received adequate impetus. Female education has remained unattractive.\textsuperscript{42} School examination results cut a sorry figure.\textsuperscript{43} There is a wide regional disparity in educational facilities and enrolments. As shown in Table 2.2, most of the higher educational institutions are concentrated (in and around Kathmandu valley) in the Central Development Region. Particularly, the Far Western Development Region\textsuperscript{41} is far behind in both respects of enrolments and educational facilities.\textsuperscript{45}

Government has been actively involved in the management and financing of education since the implementation of NESF. Local people have been encouraged to participate especially for the mobilization of local resources to meet rising costs of education. Statutory provisions have been made for zonal, district and school level committees in order to encourage citizen participation.

\textsuperscript{42} Ministry of Education and Culture, NEPAL KO SHAIKSHIK TATHYANK PRATIVEDAN, 2037, B.S., (Kathmandu Planning Division, Manpower and Statistics Section, 1980), p. 5, (It is reported that the proportion of girls in primary school enrolment was only 28.0 per cent in 1980).

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid. p. 183 (School Leaving Certificate Examination results showed that during 1977-80, the percentage of passes remained in the range of 21.4 - 36.7).

\textsuperscript{44} At present there are five development regions in Nepal. The present Far Western Development Region and Mid-Western Development Region were in one and called the Far Western Development Region till September 1980 when the government announced the fifth development region. The statistics, however, were available for four development regions only till 1981. So, they have been accordingly shown in Table 2.2.

\textsuperscript{45} For detailed information see Table No. 1 Appendix B.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (% of 6-8 yr. group)</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>104.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary (% of primary)</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (% of Lower Secondary)</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher (% of secondary)</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary schools.</td>
<td>2267</td>
<td>2540</td>
<td>2441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number ofLower Secondary schools.</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of secondary schools.</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of univ.campuses</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nepalko Shaikshik Tathyanik Prativedan, 2035, 2036, 2037, (Ministry of Education, HMG, NEPAL).

EDR = Eastern Development Region
CGR = Central Development Region
WDR = Western Development Region
FWDR = Far Western Development Region
The government expenditure in education, however, remained increasing during the Post-NESP period (1971 onwards). Between 1971-72 and 1975-76 (the implementation phase of the NESP), the national budgetary expenditure in education increased by nearly 211 per cent as compared to 89 per cent growth in total budget. Not only the government expenditure in education but also individual school budgets have also considerably inflated after the NESP’s implementation. The schools which were running with a pittance grants-in-aid during the Pre-NESP days, depended largely upon government grants in the Post-NESP period.

II. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

The development of educational participation in Nepal has been conditioned to a large extent by the political environment of the country. The present state of people’s participation in education in the village communities of Nepal is an outcome of the


47. See Table No. 2 Appendix B for details.

48. Kedar N. Shrestha, Educational Experiments in Nepal (Kathmandu: Institute of Education/IO, 1982), p. 75, (Shrestha, in a study of a few selected school budgets observed that the expenditure in the Post-NESP period had increased by nearly 132 per cent as compared to that in the Pre-NESP period).
various experiments made towards regulating education in this country. The participatory practices in education can be meaningfully understood in the background of the various political experiments made during the course of development. Therefore, this section presents a brief sketch of the role of the political factor in regulating participatory practices in education in the background of educational development in Nepal in different periods of time. The focus of the discussion would, however, be delimited to school education.

The advent of democracy in early 1951 is the turning point in the history of Nepalese nation. Accordingly, the history of Nepalese education can be studied by dividing it into two broad eras. They are: the Pre-Democracy Era and the Post Democracy Era. The Pre Democracy Era can further be divided into three periods, namely the Period of the Principalities, the Period of National Unification, and the Period of Rana Autocracy. Similarly the Post Democracy Era can also be divided into three distinct periods. They are: the Period of Popularization, the Period of Panchayatization, and the Period of Planned Progress.49 The period-wise discussion of the development of education in Nepal has been presented in the following pages.

49. Some writers have combined the period of popularization and panchayatization into one. But owing to differing political orientations, these two periods have been discussed separately in the present study. For instance, Ayan Bahadur Shrestha has dealt these periods in a unified manner. "Nadhyamic Shikshya" (pp. 35-57), Nepal Ma Shikshya (Kathmandu: Institute of Education/ TU 2059 B.S.), p. 35.
Pre-Democracy Era

The Pre-Democracy Era covers the periods of development from earliest times to the national unification in 1960, from national unification to the ascendancy of the Ranas in 1846, and from Rana autocracy to the advent of democracy in 1951.

The Period of the Principalities

Until the rise of the Gorkhas in the second half of the eighteenth century, Nepal was divided into a number of principalities ruled by feudal chieftains and tribal headmen. Accordingly, this period can be termed as the period of the principalities. Notwithstanding a multitude of politically scattered territories, the people of the land were rather integrated by the contemporary religious and spiritual values, the dominant of which were Hinduism and Buddhism. On account of this affective harmony, the roots of ancient education in Nepal laid deep into the philosophy of spiritualism. As this philosophy had emerged from the soil and climate of the land, the ancient education was truely indigenous in character. Therefore, the period of the principalities has been referred to as the period of indigenous education.50

Early Educational Climate. The early education in Nepal was organized along Hindu Ashramic and Buddhist monasterial lines.

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Since the Ashramas and monasteries were run along religious lines, education was also characterized by religious values.\textsuperscript{51} State exercised little direct control over those systems of education. Similarly, people at large had little concern for those institutions as they were directed towards producing intellectual and ruling elites for the contemporary society. The priests and scholars at the helm of affairs of those institutions were free to exercise absolute control over their academic affairs. Entrance to them was open to the wards of especially Brahmanas and Kshatriyas.\textsuperscript{52} It is said that the Buddhist institutions of learning were better organized than their Hindu counterparts.\textsuperscript{53}

In those days, non-formal elementary education was possible through the services provided by some priests or pundits (scholars) who were supported in the fulfilment of their domestic requirements by their client families. They exercised great authority regarding academic matters which the laymen could not question. The education provided by those persons was of elementary nature so that the educands after the completion of instructions could be able to manage their routine daily life. This was, in the modern sense of the term, education for literacy and numeracy.\textsuperscript{54} This practice


\textsuperscript{51} Radha Krishna Joshi, "Nepal Ma Shikshya: Ek Jhalak" (pp. 1-20), \textit{Nepal Ma Shikshya}, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{54} Kedar N. Shrestha, \textit{Educational Experiments in Nepal}, op. cit., p. 2.
presents a hoary glimpse of the one teacher elementary schools in the days of yore. The wards of the rich-people used to join the institutions of higher learning after completing elementary education at home.

Early Participatory Practices in Education. Though the early institutions of learning were independent in academic matters, they had been supported by people in matters of finance and cooperation. People's interest was reflected through donations which they willingly used to make to those institutions. The scholars and priests were not paid servants. Education was free and students were provided boarding and lodging facilities by the institutions. The costs of running the institutions with all their inmates were managed through the various donations made by people as well as their kings. The students were required, as part of their learning experiences, to visit different villages and collect alms from door to door. This practice was instrumental in cementing school-community relations. People used to visit the institutions and regarded them with high esteem. Similarly, when scholars of repute paid any visit to the villages or royal court, the people of the community and the king himself used to receive them with great respect and honour. Available evidence shows that people of the community used to donate money to those institutions on voluntary basis. "The inscriptions of Ansuvarman at Harigaon reveals an early form of voluntary taxation conceived purely on the basis of mutual agreement."56

55. Upraity, op. cit., p. 25.
In Nepal, Hindu and Buddhist religions have been flourishing simultaneously throughout many centuries. There was no state intervention in the academic affairs of the educational institutions. Infact, the kings themselves used to contribute to those institutions from the royal treasury and encouraged the people to do the same. According to Hit Narayan Jha, the Lichchnhavi Kings were famous for their love and respect towards education. They had established educational institutions known as Agrahara which were financed by the income from a land-thrust put up by the kings.

Similarly, the Buddhist Vihara used to keep records of the donations as gestures of their appreciation of public sentiments. “They carefully kept the registers of donations and privileges granted by the individuals and their kings. The Vihara preserved their records and the many convents their daily diaries”.

Owing to religious suppression by Muslim invaders in India, Hindu institutions of education gradually began to disintegrate. The seats of learning in monasteries had already started to degenerate due to the waning of Buddhist tides in the Indian sub-continent. Thus, as a result of unfavourable conditions, most centres of excellence had crumbled by the Malla period. Although Malla Kings have been regarded as the connoisseurs of art and architecture, they had not established any formal institutions of

learning, especially for the lower castes who were required to attain proficiency in certain occupational skills. In the absence of any established institution, training of occupational skills was a family business where the parents used to impart necessary knowledge and skills to their children.\textsuperscript{59} Till the end of the Malla period, only kings and their nobles were concerned about education of their children. Owing to their internal strife and the impending danger of rising British power in India, the Malla Kings could not pay due attention to the development of education. In this way, staggered by the intrusion of Islam in India and frustrated by the neglect of the rulers, indigenous education in Nepal met its dead end with the fall of the Malla regime.

\textbf{The Period of National Unification}

When the Moghul Empire was crumbling and the British were making advancements in their mission of subjugating India, Prithivi Narayan Shah of Gorkha set out on a journey to conquer new territories along the southern highlands of the Himalayas. He conquered the Kathmandu valley from the Mallas in 1968 and intensified his campaign of national unification by annexing several small principalities to the east and west of Kathmandu. But he did not live long to find his dream fully materialized. After his death, the task of territorial expansion was continued by his successors. Meanwhile, the kings on the throne of the nascent Kingdom of Nepal

\textsuperscript{59} Joshi, op. cit., p. 30.
happened to be minors and the governance of the state was run by a regency council headed by queen mothers. Consequently, power scrambles between the royal family and their noble proteges ensued which had its repercussion on the morale of the fighting army. They lost some of the battles to the British and finally settled the territories of present Nepal, between Koshi in the east and Mahakali in the west.

**The Politico-Educational Climate.** The period of national unification was marked by the rise of martial spirit. The highlight of education in this period was its military character. Inspired by national sentiments, people donated money and entered military service in large numbers. Owing to prolonged but unprecedented territorial expansion, the properties of Buddhist and Brahmanic institutions and their priests were confiscated in order to provide for the financial crisis in the country. As the main emphasis of the state policy was to expand and control the new territories, the central government could not pay any attention for the education of the common man. Nevertheless, education was still considered as a family business, and the pandits used to teach children of the locality in their homes. Their living expenses were borne by the parents. There were no hired teachers. The concept of hiring a teacher for a fixed amount of money was foreign to the Nepali soil.

60. Upralit, op. cit., p. 30.
61. Joshi, op. cit., p. 5.
Government Educational Policy. Prithivi Narayan Shah was a warrior as well as a statesman. For him education was more important for national security than religious indoctrination. Although the cream of his life was devoted to warfare tactics, he was aware of the contemporary developments that were taking place elsewhere, particularly in India. He wanted to modernize his army and administration. It is said that he had sent, on state scholarships, a few Nepalis to Calcutta in order to learn about the new arms and ammunitions used by the soldiers of the East India Company. Similarly, having inspired by the development of Urdu and Persian, he had also sent some of his men to learn the languages in the contemporary Moghul courts. But he did not live long to put his educational concepts into practice. His successors were more involved in military activities and internal power tussles. Few references were made to the educational needs of people in the rules and regulations of the country's administration during the 75 years span of this period. Therefore, no significant change in education could be enacted in this period. Had his successors followed the same policy of national consolidation, education system of the country could have taken a different turn.

What is evident from the foregoing discussion is that although a few attempts were made in the beginning towards modifying

62. Upaity, op. cit., p. 32.
63. Ibid., p. 31.
64. Ayan Bahadur Shrestha, op. cit., p. 33.
the existing educational practices, the latter developments in the royal palace did not encourage any systematic activities in this direction. The indigenous education had already degenerated and efforts for replacing or modifying it were lacking. Thus, the development of education was actually retarded in this period. That is why it has been referred to as the period of educational neglect.

The Period of Rana Autocracy

The period of national unification lasted only a few decades until Jung Bahadur Rana became the prime minister of Nepal by means of a court massacre in 1846. During the Rana period, the kings of Nepal were titular heads. The real power of governance was wrested by the Rana prime ministers. The office of the prime minister ran in the Rana family. The Rana rulers were usurpers of power and did not think in terms of development. Whatever revenue was left over after meeting the expenses of administration went into the coffers of the Rana prime ministers. In short, they were absolute rulers.

The period of the Rana oligarchy is characterized by direct state intervention in the educational affairs of the country. Education received a set-back during this period as the Rana rulers

65. Joshi, op. cit., p. 4.
virtually banned the expansion of educational institutions initiated and managed by the people in the countryside. The policies adopted by the Rana regime discouraged public initiative of any sort. Therefore, this period has been termed as the period of governmental opposition to education. 68

The Political-Educational Setting. Though development of education was deliberately restricted, history of Rana period is not of less importance from educational point of view. 69 For, it was in this period that English system of education was introduced and the nucleus of the educational administration came into being in the country. 70 Being moved by the tremendous progress made by the Britishers, Jung Bahadur Rana started an English school at his residential palace in Kathmandu soon after his return from England in 1854. In the beginning, entrance to this school was open to the children of his family. Later on, children of other noble families were also permitted entrance to this school. For many years, this school maintained its identity as an institution of aristocrats. A Rana general was assigned to look after the educational affairs which later developed into the office of the director general of education. But, as Wood puts it, "the Rana directors of education were generals in the army first. Their responsibilities as directors were minimal." 71 The second Rana prime minister Ranodip Singh moved

69. Angan Bahadur Shrestha, op. cit., p. 35.
the palace school (Durbar School) to a new site outside the palace and, being a religious man, also established a Sanskrit school with free boarding and lodging facilities to students.

Dev Shumeshwor Rana is considered as the most liberal ruler among the Ranas. He had summoned a meeting of the contemporary scholars in order to decide the system of education most suitable for the country. Consequently, mass literacy programme started in Nepal with the establishment of Bhasa Pathashalas (vernacular schools) which were based on the idea propounded by Jaya Prithivi Bahadur Singh. The schools, temporarily based in public inns and huts, were provided with a teacher by the government. If enrolment exceeded fifty, one additional teacher was provided. Besides this, text books and slates were also provided free of cost. In this way, about 150 school were established of which 50 were in Kathmandu valley and the rest in the mofusils. Although this campaign was lacking in adequate planning and programmes, it was commendable in its spirit and foresighted commitment for mass literacy. And


74. Rana Bahadur Thapa, "Pathyakram Vikas" (pp. 73-91), Nepal Ma Shikshya, op. cit., p. 80.
certainly this gesture of the government might have been enthusiastically welcomed by most people of the country. The euphoria was, however, fated to meet its doom as Dev Sheshshere was soon dethroned and exiled by his brother Chandra Shumshere Rana.

Prime minister Chandra Shumshere Rana disapproved the liberal education policy of his predecessor and closed the Bhashapathashalas. But he had to establish a few schools soon again because the Britishers in India set literacy as a requisite for admission in army. Therefore, the schools were set up mostly in and around the British army recruit centres in Nepal. On the one hand, Chandra Shumshere opposed a genuine national system of education. On the other, he was also suspicious of the English system of education. In fact, he felt the need of some schools for producing a few literates that could be appointed as clerks in the government administration. Therefore, some schools were established in 1905 for providing elementary instructions in the existing judicial and accounting practices. Those schools, known as Shrestha Pathshalas, were distorted forms of the vernacular schools. The expansion of education was, however, very slow. The elites of the country used to send their wards in India for higher education. In those days, freedom movement was slowly gaining ground in India. Sensing potential danger from the Nepali college graduates that might come in contact with the freedom fighters, Chandra Shumshere

76. Thapa, op. cit., p. 80.
unwillingly established a college in Kathmandu in 1918 with a
design to check the flow of Nepali students to India for higher
education.  This college known as Trichandra College was the only
institution for higher learning in Nepal until 1948.

Popular Demand for Education. Despite all restrictions and
vigilance on the part of the Ranas, the educational climate was
slowly changing, partly due to the influence of the Indian freedom
movement and partly by the impact of modern developments abroad.
A number of schools started to be opened by various politically
conscious people in different parts of the country, especially
along the Tarai plains bordering India. Although varied in nature -
some were Sanskrit, others Muslim Madaras, still other Buddhist
schools - most of the newly started school were influenced by the
Macaulay's system of English Education in India. Thus, the demand
for popular education was rising. Feeling the pulse of the times,
the then prime minister Juddha Shumsher Rana promulgated the
Education Ordinance of 1939 which provided for the establishment
of schools by people with the permission from the director general
of public instructions. But the schools set up under this
provision were provided with a headmaster and a clerk by the govern-
ment in order to keep close watch on the newly established schools'
activities. However, this change in policy facilitated the establish-
ment of more institutions on local initiative and support.

77. Baburam Acharya, "Nepali Shikshya Ko Itihas" (pp. 5-14).
78. Navin Shikshya, Barsha 1, Anka 5, Bhadra 2014 B.S. (Kathmandu:
79. Ayan Bahadur Shrestha, op. cit., p. 36.
80. N. Shrestha, Educational Experiments in Nepal, op. cit.,
p. 51.
Meanwhile, a new experiment to implant the Gandhian Basic Education was made in 1947 by the then prime minister Padma Shumshere Rana who wanted to diffuse the political aspirations of people emerging as a result of English education. But this system of education did not flourish for two reasons. Firstly, it had inherent weakness of its own. Secondly, people did not accept it simply because it was introduced by the Ranas.80

Thus, in spite of the stringent regulations, there were two types of educational institutions in the Rana period - the government schools and the private schools. According to financial support these institutions could be classified as follows:81

1) Fully government supported English and Vernacular schools.
2) Fully religious - thumt supported Sanskrit schools.
3) Government aided private schools.
4) Locally supported private schools.

Thus, at the time of exit of the Ranaocracy in 1930, there were only about 300 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, and 2 colleges for a population of eight million people.

**Education Policy During the Rana Period.** The foregoing discussion shows that the development of education was deliberately restricted during the Rana period. Although English education was introduced in the country, proper care was taken to keep it out of the reach of the common man. Education was privilege of a handful of Ranas and their stooges. No Nepali outside the Rana family was entitled

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to hold any office for ability and calibre. All the important
civil as well as military offices were exclusively held by the
Ranas simply by virtue of their 'noble clan'. There was no
incentive for getting education.

The Ranas were also anxious to checkmate the growth of
modern education. They were interested in keeping the people in
ignorance. The Rana regulations had not allowed the inclusion of
subjects such as civics and political science in the courses of
study even at the college level. To sum up the Ranas' educational
policy in a nutshell, it can be said that:

i) they were favourably inclined to the English system of
education for their own children,

ii) they were opposed to the idea of universal education.82

Post-Democracy Era

In actual sense of the term, the concept of universal
education for the development of the country started only after
the dawn of democracy in 1951. Education has made tremendous advance-
ment in the Post-Democracy Era. In order to have a systematic
analysis, educational development in the Post-Democracy Era has been
discussed period-wise in the following section.

The Period of Popularization

With the dawn of democracy, Nepal entered a new chapter of
its history. It was the beginning of a new partnership between the

82. Upaity, op. cit., p. 34.
government and the people and the transition from autocracy to democracy. The people were enthusiastic in directing their energy towards the task of national development. The new government, feeling the tempo of popular aspirations and demands, made several attempts to mobilize the national resources. The whole setup of the government machinery was modified and new provisions for setting up ministries and departments were made. In the field of education, the establishment of a separate ministry of education was a pioneer step in this direction. Moreover, a board of education was constituted directly under the ministry of education with the responsibility to chart out plans and programmes in order to speed up the development of education. A commission known as Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) was formed in 1953 in order to suggest the system of education suitable for the development of the country.

**Popular Participation in Education.** The dawn of democracy was marked by a mushroom growth of educational institutions throughout the country. The tremendous rise in the number of institutions following the year 1950 bears the testimony of the gusto in popular participation. As mentioned earlier in Table 2.1, the number of primary, secondary and higher institutions increased approximately by 12, 14, and 16 times respectively. Similarly, the enrolments at each level also increased by nearly 21, 13 and 21 times respectively in the same period. By all measures, this was a significant leap towards the popularization of education. The rise in popular demand in education was reflected not only from the boom in the
number of institutions but also from the rate of enrolment. While enrolment at primary level was a meagre 0.9 per cent of total school age (6-10 yrs) population of the country in 1950, it shot up to 15.8 per cent of their age cohorts in 1961.83 The rates of increase at the lower secondary and secondary levels had also maintained an upward trend. There was also a remarkable growth in the field of higher education. Of the 37 higher educational institutions established after 1951, only 4 were totally financed by the government.84 The rest were supported by the private sector with a small grants-in-aid by the government. Another significant thing in the modernization of education was the establishment of Tribhuvan University on private donations. Thus, the distinguishing feature of this period was the private initiative which was more prevalent in primary education than in any other field of education.85 Therefore, it was actually a period of educational expansion and reconstruction.86

**Government Education Policy.** The rapid development of education after 1951 is connected with the introduction of a village development scheme with the collaboration of the US government under the technical assistance programme and later with the assistance from the government of India. This scheme known as Tribhuvan Village Development Model was derived from the American experience of community development.

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85. Upraity op. cit., p. 69.
86. Ibid., p. 19.
It was based on the assumption that without the mobilization of the manpower ingenuity and enthusiasm of the rural communities it was not possible for any government to provide all assistance necessary for the social and economic development of the nation. Since Nepal was predominantly a country of villages, this method of rural development placed primary emphasis on the responsibility and action of the village people at the lowest level. The initial village development centres were started in 1953. Those centres were designed to function as an extension arm to the departments of agriculture, health, education and cottage industries. Each year, the number of such village development centres were increased in different parts of the country until 1960. The highlights of the village development programmes were as follows.

1. To secure the participation of the village people in development programmes.

2. To bring the benefits of modern scientific knowledge to the village people to meet their needs.

3. To use democratic methods for achieving the goal.

Under this scheme of things, various committees involving local leaders and social workers were formed at district and block levels in order to seek people's participation in the areas of education, agriculture and health services. As a result of these measures, several educational institutions were established under the new local-state partnership.


88. Ibid., p. 13.
The government had a liberal attitude towards expansion of educational facilities. An education code was published in 1954 for regulating the newly established institutions. A liberal policy was adopted in granting approval for the establishment of schools particularly in the private sectors. However, the government maintained the same policy of partial assistance to the schools in the private sector. Realizing primary education as a basic foundation of learning, efforts were made to establish one primary school in each of the polling booths of the 1959 general election. This indicated the government's policy of universalising education.

In order to decentralize educational administration seven divisional inspectorates of education were created with inspectors of schools posted in each division. The inspectors were authorized to open or close, approve or disapprove the grants-in-aid to schools. District education boards comprising local people were organized. School management committees were organized at the local level. The government also created 28 offices for district education inspectors to help the divisional inspectors. The new officers were given complete autonomy in the administration of primary and secondary education in their respective districts.

Thus, the major feature of the educational policy in this decade was its liberal, universal and decentralized character. However, it never achieved a state of maturity and consolidation.

90. Ibid., p. 3.
91. Ibid., p. 54.
92. Ibid., P. 56.
because political instability, uncertainty and rapid succession of
governments were the key features of this period. This period
came to an abrupt end when the king dissolved the parliamentary
system of government in 1960 and later introduced the partyless
system of Panchayat polity.

The Period of Panchayatization

The Nepalese polity took a distinctive turn when it switched
over from "multiparty" to "no party" system after the royal take-
over in 1960. The power was transferred from the people to the king.
The historic change of the 1960 introduced panchayat system in the
country. The vacuum created by the banning of political parties was
filled by setting up the organization of panchayats from the villages
to the national level. In order to gain a firmer hold in the country,
various campaigns were launched, the major of which were the promu-
ligation of new Mulki Ain (1964), Land reforms (1965), Compulsory
deposit scheme (1966), Cooperative scheme (1966) and Back to Village
National Campaign (1967). However, later developments demonstrated
that these campaigns were more aimed at the consolidation of panchayat
system than to the advancement of the country. Therefore, this
period can be termed as the period of panchayatization.

93. P.P. Karan and W.J. Jenkins, The Himalayan Kingdoms of Bhutan,
Sikkim and Nepal (New Jersey: D. Van Nostr and Company, 1963),
p. 89.
The Educational Climate. Shortly after taking over power in his own hands, the king appointed a commission in 1961 and commanded to formulate strategies in order to expedite the progress in education suitable for the changed political environment. The commission known as Sarvangin Rastriya Shikshya Samiti (All-round National Education Committee - ARNEC) presented in its report the following major recommendations: 94

1. Free and compulsory primary education.
2. Three separate streams for secondary education.
3. Liberal educational policy of the government.

Similarly, a two member team of Unesco experts also presented a report to the government in 1962. 95 The Education Advisory Council was constituted in 1967 for providing advisory services to the minister for educational affairs. 96 The king himself addressed a conference of university teachers held at Rampur in 1969 and urged for a congenial discussion on the education system which would be compatible to the genius of the panchayat polity. 97 Although the recommendations made by different agencies were not totally different from those suggested earlier by NNPC

in 1954, yet they were presented in a changed situation with a
different emphasis. But the government was not in a strong position
to implement them in their entirety. The suggestions made by
different commissions, teams or individuals were implemented only
partially.\textsuperscript{98}

It is interesting to note that there have been quite a few
genuine efforts in this period for implementing the recommendations
of various commissions. Of them, two are worth mentioning. The
first was the idea of universal free primary education. Some
selected panchayats of a few districts were authorized, besides
other things, to implement free and compulsory education through
panchayat development and land taxation scheme.\textsuperscript{99} But this scheme
turned out to be an experiment when it was withdrawn in the wake of
serious resentment by local people in 1969.\textsuperscript{100} The second effort
was the idea of vocational secondary schools.\textsuperscript{101} Although 25 such
schools had been established at various places of the country by the
year 1968, they had not been accepted by all sections of the society.\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{98} Kedar N. Shrestha, Secondary Education in Nepal: An Occasional
Paper (Kathmandu: Institute of Education/10, undated ) p. 10.
\textsuperscript{99} Kedar N. Shrestha, Educational Experiments in Nepal, op. cit., p.4.
\textsuperscript{100} Prachanda P. Pradhan, Local Institutions and People's Participa-
tion in Rural Public works in Nepal (New York: Rural Develop-
ment Committee, Cornell University, 1980), p. 25.
\textsuperscript{101} His Majesty's Government of Nepal, "Excerpts from King Mahendra's
Address to the 1st Session of Rastriya Panchayat" in Shikshya
Samachar, year 1, No. 12 Jestha 2020 (Kathmandu: Ministry of
\textsuperscript{102} Ayan Bahadur Shrestha, op. cit., p. 37.
General educational institutions were growing in number, but the growth spurt had declined (Table 2.1). The primary school enrolment had reached 32 per cent of the school age children at the end of the decade i.e. in 1970. In other words, it had just doubled the enrolment proportion recorded at the end of 1960.

Thus, the various experiments made in this period indicate that committed efforts were lacking although thinking for educational restructuring was much in evidence. They also suggested an uneasy search for a new strategy to meet the challenge of the time.

**Government Education Policy.** Consequent upon the 1960's political change, the village development scheme was abolished and replaced by Panchayat development scheme which was directed towards institutional development, social mobilization, and attitudinal changes. The responsibility for implementing the technical programmes was placed with the different departments of the government. Therefore, educational as well as other programmes of rural development were conducted by different departments. All development activities were conducted both from the top (e.g. the various government departments) as well as from the bottom (e.g. village and district panchayats).

With the introduction of panchayat development scheme, changes in education policy also became imminent. The appointment of various commissions had come in this context. Worried about the

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103. *Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yojana* (2028-32), op. cit., p. 3.
104. Ojha and Adhikari, op. cit., p. 76.
alarming growth of educational institutions in the previous decade, the government became more interested in consolidating the structure of educational administration in the country. In the absence of effective administrative control, it could not risk to change the existing educational practices at the grass-root level. Therefore, inspite of some patchwork and piecemeal attempts on curricular and administrative changes, no significant departure in government educational policy was discernable in this period.

In order to effectively organize administration, the country was divided into 14 zones and 75 districts. Zonal education officers were made responsible for the supervision of secondary schools and the primary education was placed directly under the jurisdiction of the district education inspectors. Department of education was expanded with separate sections of primary and secondary education. Some changes in the courses of study were also made. Panchayat was made a compulsory subject in the schools. In addition to this, government regulations sought to provide for the nomination procedures in the formation of school management committees which used to be constituted by local people through general consensus previously.

Although various changes in educational administration had taken place in this period, yet they did not basically affect the management of individual schools at the local level. The schools established by the people remained to be managed by the school managing committees. The government continued to provide token annual grants to the schools. The school management committee held
the responsibility of appointing the teachers, fixing their salaries and benefits, and operating the schools as usual. 103

Being absorbed in political considerations for consolidating the panchayat system, the government was hesitant in changing the existing mechanism which was in vogue from the previous period. In spite of floating various ideas for educational reconstruction, no significant steps were taken in this period. To sum up, it can be said that the government adopted a policy of least change. This period of 'much ado and less action' was brought to a close with the embarkation of a gigantic scheme in 1971 in the form of the National Education System Plan (1971-76).

The Period of Planned Progress

In a general political perspective, the period of planned progress can be placed within the period of Panchayatization. But, from an educational point of view it is different because the state policy transformed from a position of least involvement to a position of active involvement in the educational development of the country in this period. Therefore, it has been treated separately.

The period of planned progress in the development of education in Nepal started with the implementation of the National Education System Plan (1971-76). It is said that the plan was prepared by incorporating all useful recommendations made by various commissions and experts. 105 For the first time in Nepal, investment

103 Kedar N. Shrestha, Secondary Education in Nepal, op. cit., p. 25.
105 Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yetana (2028-32), op. cit. P. Introduction.
in education was officially recognized as an investment in
national development. The plan has been described as a milestone
in the development of education as it has revamped the whole system
of education in the country.

The Educational Setting. The NEP provided basically for a two
level structure of education - school education and higher education.
The school education was put under the directorate of education in
the ministry of education. Higher education was placed under the
pervue of Tribhuvan University - the only institution of higher
learning in the country. At the school level, the primary education
consisted of three grades 1 through 3, lower secondary education
4 through 7 grades and secondary education 8 through 10 grades.
Similarly, higher education was divided into four levels, namely
certificate, diploma, degree and research.

The main focus of instructional programmes at the primary
level was to impart literacy. A uniform curriculum was followed
throughout the country. The lower secondary level which aimed at
character building was given vocational bias by providing pre-
vocational courses in addition to the regular ones. Secondary
education provided three different channels - general, vocational
and sanskrit. At least one vocational subject was compulsory in
each stream. The basic objective of this level was to produce
productive citizens for the country's development. Similarly,
higher education was geared to produce skilled manpower for national
development.

107. Ibid.
108. Mohnad Mohain, "Nepal Attempts at Educational Renovation"
(pp. 59-70), Kamal P. Nalla(ed.), Nepali A Conpectum, op. cit.,
op. cit., p. 61.
Strenuous efforts have been made to extend educational opportunities in the country. With the expansion of facilities, school enrolments had also considerably increased in this period. The plan had aimed at achieving 64 per cent enrolment at the primary level by the end of plan period.\textsuperscript{109} The available evidence indicates that the target was attained in the year 1977.\textsuperscript{110} The overall educational achievement in terms of growth of institutions and enrolments show a larger rate of enrolment at the secondary level than that at the primary level (Table 2.1). But this discrepancy might have appeared by the inclusion of the 4th and 5th grades in the secondary level by deleting them from the primary level. The major highlight of this decade was that primary enrolment had nearly trebled from that of the year 1970.\textsuperscript{111} Primary education has been made free and all recurrent costs have been met by the government grants. It is said that at least one primary school has been established in each village panchayat area. Similarly, large proportion of expenditure on secondary and higher education have been borne by the government.

Government Education Policy. The NESP was promulgated under the statutory provisions made under the Education Act 1971.\textsuperscript{112} According to the plan, national objectives of education were enunciated as follows.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yojana}, op. cit., p. 63.
\textsuperscript{111} In 1980, primary enrolment was 90.4 per cent whereas as in 1970 it was 32 per cent (See \textit{Nepal Ko Sheikhak Tathvaak 2037}, p. 5 and \textit{Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yojana}, p. 3.)
\textsuperscript{112} Ministry of Law and Justice, "Shikshya Ain 2028" (pp. 94–96), \textit{Nepal Ain Sangrah: Purak Khand 2028 B.S.} (Kathmandu: 1971), p. 91.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Rastriya Shikshya Padhatiko Yojana}, op. cit., p. 3.
1. To prepare citizens loyal to the country and crown.
2. To produce skilled manpower for economic development.
3. To inculcate desirable qualities in each individual.
4. To develop national language, culture, literature and art.

In order to achieve these objectives, the government adopted a policy of direct involvement in the planning and operation of educational institutions in the country. Accordingly, ministry of education was reorganized, and regional directorates were established. District education office was made the main field agency for the administration and supervision of educational operation. The different types of schools existing before the plan implementation (government, public and private schools) were brought under the umbrella of national schools governed by a uniform curriculum. The highest body responsible for the plan implementation was the National Education Committee, the members of which were nominated by the king. In order to secure local support, zonal and district level education committees were formed. In the beginning the plan had no provision for school level committees which were reinstated in the form of school assistance committees later in 1974 through an amendment in the Education Regulation 1971.

114 Kedar N. Shrestha, Educational Experiments in Nepal, op. cit., p. 98.
115 Ministry of Law and Justice, "Shikshya Niyyamavali, 2029 B.S. (pp. 27-78), Nepal Niyyam Samagrahi Khand 8, 2032 B.S. (Kathmandu: 1979), p. 34.
The government changed its policy of granting financial assistance directly to the schools. Instead, the grants were forwarded through district education committees. All expenditure of primary schools was met through grants. The assistance to lower and secondary schools depended on the expenses of the teacher salaries such that 75 and 50 per cent of their respective recurring expenses were met through grants. Other expenses like building construction, furniture and physical facilities had to be managed through local resources. The responsibility to mobilize the local resources rested with the district education committee. Above all, the school administration was made responsible to district education office. Local school committees were assigned assisting roles only. They were made ancillary bodies to the district education committee. However, the rules remained changing continuously. The Education Regulations 1974 have been amended six times till 1980.

Thus, it seems that the government adopted a policy of universalization of primary education by providing a minimum education to the maximum number of children through a three year literacy programme. The policy of vocationalization of secondary education was reflected in the government's commitment to meet 75 per cent costs of vocational schools. However, the policy of active and intensive involvement in school operation had rendered the system highly centralized.

An appreciable change in government’s Post-NESP education policy became apparent in the wake of the 1979 political unrest
when the Education Act 1971 was amended in order to make special provisions for financially self-reliant schools. The school committees of such schools were given more autonomy and power for the management of their respective institutions. However, the seventh amendment of the Education Regulation (1971) in 1981 indicated a reversal in government's education policy to the Pre-NESP position of least direct involvement in local school management. The spirit of the local school management committees had revived although the implications are yet to be seen.

Thus, the foregoing analysis shows three salient features of the development of education in Nepal. Firstly, education has remained a family business for centuries so far as the masses are concerned. Only the elites have been enjoying educational privilege through organized institutions of higher learning. Secondly, education has emerged through successive periods of governmental neglect and opposition and entered the modern era, though belatedly. Thirdly, political turbulence has engendered much experimentation in education and the state policy has been in the throes of inchoate change.

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116. Ministry of Law and Justice, Shikshya Ain (2nd Amendment) 2036 B.S. (pp. 43-44), Nepal Ain Sangrah Parak Khand 2036 B.S. (Kathmandu, 1979), p. 44.

117. Regional Education Directorate (RVEDR), Badhi Artik Bhar Bahan Garne Vidyalaya Ko Sahayag Samiti Tatha Jana Sahabhalita Bhaa Nirdeshan (Nepalganj, undated).