CHAPTER - II

WELFARE STATE AND EDUCATION
This chapter traces the emergence of Welfare State in India and discusses how the Indian state performs the welfarist functions with specific reference to education which is conceived as an important function of the modern state. For this purpose various educational objectives stated by various plans are examined. An attempt has also been made to understand the constraints and limitations of the functioning of Welfare State in general and Indian welfare state in particular.

Welfare state has been defined from different perspectives. Some treat it as an economic proposition. A few think that it is an institutional arrangement for the solution of poverty. It has also been interpreted as an uneasy compromise between individualism and collectivism.\(^1\) If one has to talk about the actual origin of the welfare state, it is neither wholly inspired by capitalism nor by socialism.\(^2\) It is a typical English product.\(^3\) In the United Kingdom the inadequacy of private charity, philanthropy and poor law to meet the pressing demands of the poor people who acquired the new voting power, and the increasing capacity of the public exchequer to meet certain basic services of the people resulted in the growth of the welfare state. Welfare state helps to the extent it is practicable, both in the formulation and solutions of the felt and publicized problems of the want in the backdrop of the widespread fear of an impending revolution. The rise of the trade union movement, political consciousness of the people, and the inadequacy of private charity added welfare and service functions to the administrative state.

In the beginning the business of the state was confined to law and order and physical security. The state was expected to protect each man’s freedom to act as he chooses, provided he does not infringe upon the freedom of others.\(^4\) But welfare state has some additional functions to perform like looking after education, laying of roads, facilitating development of agriculture, industry in addition to law and order or protective functions. The writings of Bentham, J.S. Mill, T.H. Green, etc. indicated the importance given to these functions of the State.\(^5\)

The political and economic conditions of the 19th century in Britain led to the creation of welfare state. Welfare state envisaged a society where political power was more widely distributed than economic power. State ownership and management of economic enterprise was not encouraged but the government's intervention was sought for checking undesirable monopoly, competition or exploitation. Besides, the state has legislated for one reason or another conferring benefits to classes that had failed. In the
competitive struggle. To be specific it was not concerned with equality of incomes but only with the narrowing of class differences so that the needs of the scheduled groups are satisfied and their share in power as voters become meaningful.

It would be erroneous to compare welfare state with communist state. The analogy is wrong both in term and spirit. While communism signifies the culmination of class struggle, welfare statism recognizes the coexistence of classes. It is only a continuum of harmony and accommodation and diverse sectional interests within the basic structure of capitalist economy and political democracy. It is founded on the practical assumption of a positive role of the state as a tool of society, a servant to be used to solve problems, that could not be otherwise solved by society alone.

It has been further argued that state emerged essentially as a coercive organization of the ruling classes and this basic element in the character of the state persists even today. But during the past century or so, the modern state has developed new models of domination as well. Overt and exclusively coercive methods (as mentioned earlier) do not suffice any longer and at any rate they have become increasingly expensive for the ruling classes. Hence the contemporary state is a responsive state as well; it responds to the demands for change and carries out reforms in the system. At the same time it has an elaborate process of legitimization in order to get the state power acceptable to the wider sections of the people.

In the 1930s, under the influence of post depression theories of Keynes, the capitalist state undertook significant economic role to generate demand and employment. Marxists argued that these services are largely necessitated by capitalist crisis. These services helped to make capitalism more efficient and productive, and on the other hand acted as a form of social control mechanism, helping to maintain social peace and to legitimize capitalist dominance. Contrary to popular belief fostered by social democrats, Marxists with other radicals argued strongly that the welfare state has not altered the class structure of capitalism in any significant way and welfare state did not redistribute income from the rich to the poor. It is a form of horizontal distribution involving intra-class transfer of resources. In short, the welfare state is not a socialist measure. The welfare state assumes no conflict between the individual good and the common good but conceives the common good as contribution to the growth of individual personality. Democracy in this sense sought to confirm to the principle of welfare by harmonizing individual welfare into a pattern of general welfare in a way that (he latter did not become
qualitatively different from the former. In a nutshell, it is the application of a collectivist method for the individualistic aims of laissez faire.

The welfare state typifies a modified capitalism or humanized capitalism. Here exploitation is not direct and naked. State becomes an instrument of showering benefits like profit sharing, housing, health care, legal aid and free schooling etc.

It has been argued that welfare state in India assumes qualitatively, a new form from the Western model. The resources at the disposal of the state are less and people who are dependent on the services of the state are more. At the same time the social contradictions are so sharp that urgent social economic reforms are needed for the existence of the state. Land reforms, development of public sector, efforts to provide free and compulsory education to the children below the 14 years of age, and various concessions to the working class as well as weaker sections are some of the glaring examples of the responsive role of the contemporary state. This role is expressed through various public policies. These are not mere superficial measures but necessarily substantive ones, because without these changes, the capitalist state would find itself difficult to survive. These policies however do not replace the contradictions which threaten to affect the domination of the ruling class, the coercive instruments freely intervene.

The anxiety of the ruling class for legitimacy is as acute as their need for control over instruments of coercion. After the growth of the workers movement, with the introduction of universal franchise, the ruling class has all the more felt the necessity of legitimizing its own existence. Through a variety of institutions like Parliament, judiciary, media, education etc., the ruling class conveys to the people that these institutions are open to all and hence the state truly represents the interests of all sections of the society. The process of injection of such beliefs in the minds of common people is done very sophisticatedly. The ideological hegemony is established through various democratic processes like elections, and other socializing agencies like press, government and socialization process.

The role of the state in the developing countries is qualitatively different from that of developed countries. Due to the peculiarities of developing counties like India, the state has to intervene in various public utility services and state planning acquires a considerable significance.
The welfare component of the Indian state will be explicitly known by its various constitutional provisions enshrined in the Constitution and through planning. (Because the present chapter is concerned with education, some constitutional provisions about education are mentioned here. Later a review of educational planning in various plans is presented).

Article 45 under the Directive Principles of State Policy deals with provision of free and compulsory education for children. Articles 15, 16, 17 deal with right to equality and equal opportunities in public employment. Article 29 deals with protection of cultural and educational rights of minorities. Article 46 deals with promotion of educational and economic interests of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other weaker sections.

The welfare component of the Indian state will be explicitly known through its planning. The necessity of planning arose because of the following factors. 1. Some of the basic defects of capitalism have drawn attention to the fact that unless a free enterprise economy is regulated and controlled, it would not ensure stable economic growth. This obviously means that free enterprise economy has to be planned and guided by an agency in order to attain the best results. 2. Experience gained by governments in the economic field during the period of wars enhanced the popularity of economic planning. 3. Remarkable achievements of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia through economic planning also attracted public attention. 4. After the second world war, a keen desire to develop quickly was increasingly felt in the developing countries and this desire made it necessary to have state intervention as well as planning for development.

Gunnar Myrdal believes that the basic principle in the ideology of economic planning is that the state shall take an active, indeed the decisive role in the economy, by its own acts of investment and enterprise and by its various controls, inducements and restrictions over the private sector, the state shall initiate, spur and steer economic development. “These policy measures shall be rationally coordinated and coordination be made explicit in an over all plan for specific number of years ahead”. He says that the whole ideology of planning in all its manifestation is thus essentially rationalist in approach and interventionist in conclusions”. In this context he also talked of circular causation the need to improve levels of nutrition, housing, health, education and general culture to break up the rigidities of social stratification; to equalize opportunities and increase social mobility; to make local and sectional community organization; to extend and intensify participation by the people in such communities as well as in the national community;
and to base that participation on more rational considerations of their true interest.\textsuperscript{16} Otherwise these undesirable conditions act as obstacles to economic development.

The Indian state adopted planning for development for which it has set up the Planning Commission. The First Five Year Plan states “the central objective of planning in India is to raise the standards of living of the people and to open opportunities for a richer and more varied life. Planning must therefore, aim both at utilizing more effectively the resources, human and material available to the community so as to obtain from them a larger output of goods and services and also at reducing inequalities of income, wealth and opportunity.”\textsuperscript{17} Planning is democratic and its approach is defined in the Directive Principles of State policy also. Article 38 (part iv) says, . The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of national life. 2. The state shall, in particular strive to minimize the inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations. Article 39 says that certain principles of policy to be followed by the state, the state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing -

\begin{enumerate}
  \item that the citizens men and women equally, have the right to have an \textit{adequate} means of livelihood;
  \item that the ownership and control of material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good;
  \item that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment;
  \item that there is equal \textit{pay} for \textit{equal} work for both \textit{men} and \textit{women};
  \item that the health and strength of workers, men and women and the tender age of children are not abused and the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.
  \item that childhood and youth are protected against \textit{exploitation} and against moral and material abandonment.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{enumerate}

Apart from Article 39, Articles 40 to 48 in Part IV of the Constitution also reveal the role of Indian state in promoting the welfare of the people and it is the duty of the state to make \textit{necessary} laws for the \textit{effective} implementation.\textsuperscript{19}
The significance given to planning became clear with the pronouncements made by our leaders. For instance, the late Prime Minister Smt. Gandhi said “planning in our country is a charter of orderly progress. It strengthens the social and economic fabric of the country as a whole and of the different regions and states, and is a powerful contribution to the goal of “National Integration”.

From time to time, the Indian Government sets goals for national development, and for this it uses planning as a principal tool. The parliament declared as early as in December, 1954, that “the broad objective of economic policy should be to achieve the socialistic pattern of society”. It further said that this is possible only through planning. The basic objective of planning is "providing sound foundations for sustained economic growth, for increasing opportunities for gainful employment and improving living standards and working conditions for the masses".

Apart from the basic thrust, the Planning Commission has formulated certain educational targets and aims.

The first Five Year plan 1951-56 considered certain educational targets and aims. These are i) Re-organization of the educational system and integration of its different stages and branches, ii) Expansion in various fields, especially in areas of basic, technical and vocational education iii) Consideration of the existing secondary and university education and the creation of a system of higher education suited to the needs of rural areas. iv) Expansion of facilities for women's education, especially for the basic schools and attempting to provide equal opportunities all over the country.

The Second Five Year Plan recognized the determinant influence of education on the rate of economic development. It laid emphasis on (a) basic education (b) expansion of elementary education (c) diversification of curricula at the secondary level (d) improvement of the standard of education at the college and university level (e) development of professional and technical education (f) development of social education and cultural programme.

Educational planning in the Third Five Year Plan stated that in the field of general education, as distinguished from technical education, the government laid major emphasis on the provision of facilities for education of all children in the age group of 6 to 11. The emphasis is also on extension and improvement of teaching of science at the secondary
and university stages, development of vocational and technical education at all levels, expansion and improvement of facilities for the teachers to teach at each stage of education, education of girls, and substantial reduction in existing disparities in levels of development in education between boys and girls. All elementary schools were to be organized according to the basic pattern. Reorganization of university education along the line of third year degree course was to be completed, and facilities for post graduate studies and research work was to be further expanded and improved.  

During the Third Plan, NCERT was constituted (in 1962) for improving the quality at the school level. Soon after, NCERT conducted an educational survey in 1965-66. Greater emphasis was laid on science education during the Third Plan,

The Fourth Plan attempted to face three major tasks in the field of education:  

a) Removal of deficiencies in the existing educational system and linking it more effectively with the increasing demand of social and economic development.  
b) Removal of internal stresses and strains in the educational system which had developed as a consequence of rapid extension during the first three plans and  
c) Extension of the system in response to social urges and economic needs to give priority to the training of technical personnel.

It is observed that the ambiguity of approach, vagueness of objectives and inconsistent priorities could not provide a clear cut theoretical background for methodology of planning. Commenting on the educational planning, J.P. Naik in his book "Education in Fourth Plan", comments that “It is a pity that we did not make full use of opportunities that we had in the last eighteen years. It would not have mattered very much if we had not adopted planning in education in 1950”.

The Fifth Five Year plan 1974-79 emphasized four issues in educational development. These are:

1. Equalization of educational opportunities for social justice.  
2. Coordination between various educational levels with employment and economic development.  
3. Quality improvement  
4. Co-operation of intelligentsia, including students, in social and economic development. It also stressed on professionalization of education at secondary level and reorganization of curricula.
The Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85 emphasized eradication of illiteracy, universal primary education, and introduction of job orientation. There is greater emphasis on the expansion of primary and secondary education and adult education. The emphasis is on the development and consolidation of facilities within the twisting higher educational institutions and also on organizing an information system for technical manpower.26

In all the previous Five Year Plans, education was considered as a social service, rather than an input in the development process. P.N. Haksar says that “User: we get rid of the idea that education is some kind of social service performed by the welfare state, and substitute it with the idea that education is the most critical input into the entire process of social, economic, political and cultural transformation of India, the so called educational reforms would predictably produce explosive social tensions in our country”,

It seems there is an apparent change in emphasis from the Sixth Five Year Plan onwards. Education as an instrument for the development of human resources is now considered to be pivotal in the social and economic development of the country. The approach paper to the Seventh Five Year Plan for education has recognized that the existing education system requires certain radical changes.28

The Seventh Five Year Plan assigned Human Resources Development in the development strategy. It suggested a new design of education, which is flexible, varying, relevant and linked to widely diverse local cultures and social environments. He has been laid on innovation, on low cost alternatives and social involvement, all aimed at linking education effectively to the needs of pupil to employment and to development. The major programmes in the Seventh Plan for education are:29

a. Universal elementary education by 1990;

b. Eradication of illiteracy in age group of 15-35;

c. Qualitative improvements and reorientation of education at all stages, with special emphasis on vocationalisation of higher secondary education, improvements in science and technology at secondary stage, improvements in the standards of education, restructuring courses in higher education, extension of applied research facilities at University stage; and,

d. Modernizing technical education.

All these proposals are reflected in the New Education Policy. This reveals the fact
that policy makers are very much aware of about the educational policy that is going to be formulated.

It is recognized that the contemporary State is the combination of coercive, responsive and legitimate components. It has its critics and supporters. Though there are constraints and limitations on the role of the state in providing various welfare functions, focus should be on how best one can administer the present state with effective allocation, proper planning and improving the bureaucracy etc.

The State should take an active role in providing education to the people in developing countries like India, to break the rigidities of social stratification, to equalize opportunities and to ensure development. This calls for the formulation of a realistic public policy in the field of education. It depends on how the State identifies the diversified needs of the different sections of the public (public in India is not a homogeneous category), it also depends on how the State synchronizes the varied needs of the different sections of the public. In this context the state initiating the public debate on different aspects of the present educational system for the formulation of a new educational policy acquired significance. This initiative on the part of the State is considered to be important for two reasons i) Public debate provides the necessary inputs in the form of various alternatives for the political system ii) It also provides legitimacy to the political system to formulate a new policy.

In the Indian context, formulation of different educational policies, based on the recommendations of different commissions constituted by the government, came as a response to the changes in the socio-economic and political environment. Whereas the National Policy on Education (NPE 1986) was formulated by the government (without constituting a commission) based on a public debate only. Subsequent chapters discuss the evolution of educational policy in India, the role of multiple agencies in the formulation of the educational policy, the comparative analysis of the document ‘Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective 1985’ and the NPE 1986, the responses of the state governments and public on the NPE 1986.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Ibid


6. Ibid

7. Miliband and others put forward these arguments. Ibid p.6.


12. Ibid p.5.


20. Quoted in Man Mohan Singh’s preface to Seventh Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, GOI, New Delhi: October 1985, P.IX.

29. Ibid