CHAPTER - V

CHANGES IN THE PATTERN OF SECONDARY
EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL AFTER THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EDUCATION
COMMISSION, 1964-66
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Within ten years after the implementation of the recommendations of the Secondary Education commission (1952-53) it was felt that a comprehensive review of the educational system was needed with a view to initiating fresh and more determined effort at educational reconstruction.

With this aim in view the Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Prof. D. S. Kothari was appointed in 1964 to advise the government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects.

But the formulation of a national pattern of education demanded an examination of the socio-economic condition of the country.

About 20 years had passed after India won freedom but there were so many problems which remained unsolved such as the lack of self sufficiency in food. The country was in short supply of food at its existing level of population which would be added by 230 million persons during the next two decades1. As a result there would be huge shortage of food which was impossible to import. Self sufficiency in food thus became the prime necessity. Allied to this was the colossal poverty of the masses and the large incidence of unemployment among the people. Even more important was the lack of social and national integration. Indian society is hierarchical, stratified and deficient in vertical mobility. The social distance between different classes such as between the educated and uneducated, the rich and the poor is large. Moreover there are different religions and more dangerous the caste-

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difference. All these were extending their influences even under the very democratic processes of the constitution itself. With these problems there were certain political challenges - need to strengthen democracy, defence of the country's freedom and the growing awakening among the masses who were suppressed for centuries, awakened and became conscious about their rights and demanded education, equality of higher standard of life and better civic amenities. Another international challenge during this period was that India did not yet start the scientific Industrial Revolution which developed in the western countries 200 years ago. As a result standard of living of Indian people is much lower than that of the West.

All these problems and challenges demanded a change on a grand scale and this was possible only through education. But the existing system of education could not meet the need. A national system of education was the only instrument which would serve the purpose.

Through this national system of education the country would have economic prosperity. There would have no self sufficiency in food unless the farmer had a science-based education to adopt the new modern scientific techniques. The same was true to industry. The skilled manpower needed for the relevant research and its systematic application to agriculture, industry, and other sectors of life could only come from the development of scientific and technological education. It was again education which helped in developing a successful democracy through creating a dedicating and competent leadership and the cultivation of essential values like self control, tolerance, mutual goodwill and consideration for others. The Kothari Commission suggested a new pattern with a new structure. Regarding the structure the commission recommended the introduction of a uniform pattern of 10+2+3 all over the country. The pattern from pre-school stage to Higher Secondary stage would be in the following manner:
(i) Pre School stage of 1 to 3 years.

(ii) A primary stage of 7 or 8 years divided into two substages -

(a) A lower primary stage of 4 or 5 years.

(b) and a higher primary stage of 3 years.

(iii) A lower secondary or high school stage of 3 or 2 years in general education or of 1 to 3 years in vocational education.

(iv) A Higher Secondary Stage of two years of general education or 1 to 3 years of vocational education.

The commission also mentioned that first 10 years of schooling would provide a course of general education without any specialisation and it would be followed by an external examination.

West Bengal, on the basis of the recommendations of the Education Commission, abandoned the existing Eleven class Higher Secondary pattern and adopted the 10 + 2 + 3 pattern. It was introduced from 1st January, 1973. The structural pattern of school education in the state would be as follows -

i) School education should cover a period of ten years.

ii) The first five years should cover primary education.

iii) The next five years would cover secondary education which was divided into two stages viz., the Junior Secondary course covering a period of three years from class VI to VIII and the secondary course covering a period of two years from class IX to X.

It would be followed by a Higher Secondary Stage of two years - classes XI and XII. The existing system of introducing specialisation in class IX was discarded and it was decided that the first ten years of schooling would provide a course of general education. There would be an external examination after class X called Madhyamik Pariksha. There would be no other external examination before it.¹

The adoption of this 10 + 2 + 3 structural pattern in West Bengal was wise enough from different points of view. The national policy of education emphasised a uniform pattern of education all over India. The adoption of this pattern brought about an uniformity in secondary education with other parts of the country.

From the point of view of maturity for entry into the university the decision of introducing 12 years schooling was wise. It may be mentioned in this context that different committees and commissions emphasised 12 year schooling as the dividing line between school and university. As far back as in 1919, the Calcutta University Commission proposed that the dividing line between the university and the secondary school should be drawn at the Intermediate Examination which came after twelve years of education. The University Education Commission (1948) recommended that the students should be admitted to the university after the completion of twelve years. According to the committee on emotional integration (1962) the eleven year period of school education was inadequate preparation for entrance to the university and the lengthening of the course by one year was deemed necessary. At the conference of the State Education Ministers held in 1964, it was resolved that a twelve year course was the goal towards which the country must work. Moreover all the advanced countries of the world a student entering the university was expected to be eighteen years or more. At this age only he could be adequately prepared for entering upon a course of higher education. Before that the students in general do not attain maturity to enter higher education and it was not favourable for good education also. So the decision of the Govt. of West Bengal to lengthen the period of secondary education by one year and to make the total duration of school stage 12 years must be welcomed. Another important decision of the Govt. was that the secondary education should be broken up into three substages -- Lower, High and
Higher Secondary. The Lower and High School stage covered the first ten years of school and the Higher Secondary consisted of two years. Thus there was a break after class X. This is a very important decision because in many cases class X could be the terminating point. Those who wanted to join the work force of the society or join the vocational course might leave the school after class X. But in reality very few of the students coming out of secondary schools joined the work-force mainly because of paucity of employment opportunity. As regards vocational courses they were neither interested nor there were sufficient attractive and employment generating courses open before them. As a result the idea of making class X a terminating point proved a failure.

The Education Commission dealt with the construction of a new curriculum in details. In the 1960's the school curriculum was in flux all over the world. The existing curriculum was generally criticised as being inadequate and outmoded and not properly designed to meet the needs of the modern world. The school curriculum in India was also very narrowly conceived and largely out of date. This curriculum was not only out step with modern knowledge but also out of tune with the life of the people. So the old curriculum demanded a radical change. The Kothari Commission recommended a new curriculum. It remarked that all good and purposeful education should consist of four basic elements -

- literacy which includes a study of Languages, Humanities and the Social Sciences.

- numeracy which includes a study of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences.

- work experience which emphasises relating education to productivity and

- social service which promotes national and social integration.
In order to develop a full-fledged secondary education the commission recommended the inclusion of all the four basic elements in our school curriculum. The commission also mentioned the broad areas of curriculum studies for different sub-stages as follows:

**Higher Primary Stage (Classes V to VIII)**

a) Two languages -- (i) Mother tongue or Regional language and (ii) Hindi or English.

    Note: A third language (English or Hindi or the regional language) might be studied on an optional basis.

b) Mathematics  
c) Science  
d) Social Studies (or History, Geography and Civics)  
e) Work experience and Social Service  
f) Physical Education  
g) Education in Moral and Physical values.

**Lower Secondary Stage (Classes VIII to X)**

(a) Three languages

    In non Hindi speaking areas these languages should be

i) Mother tongue or the Regional language

ii) Hindi

iii) English

    In the Hindi speaking areas they should normally be

i) Mother tongue or the Regional language

ii) English (or Hindi if English was taken as the mother tongue).

iii) A modern Indian language other than Hindi.

    (A classical language might be studied in addition to the above three languages on an optional basis.)
The Kothari Commission recommended an workable three language formula. The formula was that the students of the non-Hindi areas had to learn the following three languages - Mother tongue or Regional language, Hindi and English. In the Hindi areas they should be Mother tongue or Regional language, English (or Hindi if English was taken as Mother tongue) and a modern Indian language other than Hindi. This formula was evolved in 1956 but could not be implemented due to several difficulties such as the general opposition to a heavy language load in the curriculum, the lack of motivation for the study of an additional Indian language in the Hindi areas, the resistance to the study of Hindi in non Hindi areas etc. The commission recommended a very pragmatic and practical approach to solve the vexed question of language. It handled very carefully the most vital and emotional aspect of modern Indian education. The three language formula recommended by the commission was expected to promote national integration as well as international understanding.

Consequent upon the recommendations of the Kothari Commission a radical change in the curriculum of the secondary education took place in West Bengal. The four elements of literacy, numeracy, work experience and social service which the commission mentioned were planned to be included in the curriculum. The

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prevailing educational system included the element of literacy though its attainment was not satisfactory. The second element was quite weak and needed a great deal of emphasis. But the third and fourth were completely neglected in West Bengal like other states in India. These two elements should be highlighted - the former mainly for relating education to productivity and the later as a means of social and national integration. West Bengal became aware of the shortcomings and took steps to reorganise the curriculum accordingly. The reorganised curriculum introduced from 1.1.1974 is presented below:

**Curriculum for classes VI, VII and VIII of Junior High Schools and X class High Schools**

1) First language - one paper 100 marks (including 10 marks for oral test). The following are the recognised First Languages:

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(2) Second Language : One paper 100 marks English or Bengali.

(English for those who offered English as first language and Bengali for those who offered a language other than English as first language).

(3) Third language : one paper : 100 marks (classes VII and VIII).
A third language should be selected from any of the following groups:

(a) Bengali

(provided that a candidate not offering Bengali as first or Second Language should offer Bengali as third language).

(b) A classical language, among Sanskrit, Pali, Parsian, Arabic, Greek, Latin, Classical Tibetan, Classical Armenian.

(c) A Modern Foreign Language other than English, among French, German, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian.

(d) A modern Indian Language other than the First Language, as may be approved by the Board.


5. Physical sciences : one paper 100 marks (including 20 marks allotted to oral test and class record).

6. Life Science : one paper 100 marks (including 20 marks allotted to oral test and class record).

7. India and Her people : History one paper 100 marks (including 10 marks for oral test and class record).

8. India and Her people : Geography. One paper 100 marks (including 10 marks for oral test, project work and class record).


Total - 700 marks for class VI, 900 marks for class VII and class VIII.

Curriculum for the Madhyamik Examination

Regular candidates were eligible for admission to the Madhyamik Examination at the end of class X according to the new structural
pattern. Regular candidates were those who, having prosecuted a regular course of studies in the High Schools recognised by the Board, were presented at the Madhyamik Pariksha at the end of class X. No one was allowed to take the Final Examination of the Board at the end of class X unless he/she prosecuted a complete course of studies in class X school recognised by the Board according to the new structural pattern.

Candidates must offer the subjects from 1 to 9 compulsorily. They might also offer one Additional subject on optional basis.

1. First language: Two papers of 100 marks each. Total 200 marks (including 40 marks allotted to oral test).

The following are the recognised First Languages:

1. Assamese
2. Bengali
3. English
4. Gujrati
5. Hindi
6. Lushai
7. Malayalam
8. Marathi
9. Modern Tibetan
10. Nepali
11. Oriya
12. Punjabi (Gurumukhi)
13. Santali
14. Sadani
15. Telegu
16. Tamil
17. Urdu.

2. Second Language: one paper 100 marks. English or Bengali.

(Bengali for those who offered English as First Language.

English for those who offered a language other than English as first language.)
3. Third Language: One paper 100 marks (A third language was to be selected from any one of the following groups):

(a) Bengali

(provided that a candidate not offering Bengali as first or 2nd language must offer Bengali as the third language).

(a) A classical language (Sanskrit, Pali, Persian, Arabic, Greek, Latin, Classical Tibetan, Classical Armenian).

(b) A modern Foreign language other than English (French, German, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian).

(c) A modern Indian Language other than the First Language as the Board approved.

4. Mathematics: one paper 100 marks.

5. Physical science: one paper 100 marks (Including 20 marks allotted to oral test and class records).

6. Life Science - one paper 100 marks (Including 20 marks allotted to oral test and class record).

7. India and Her people: History, One paper 100 marks (Including 10 marks for oral test and class record).

8. India and Her people: Geography, One paper 100 marks (Including 10 marks for oral test and class record).

9. Work Education, Physical Education and Social Service including school performance. One paper 100 marks (work education - 50 marks, physical education 30 marks, social service 10 marks, school performance 10 marks).

Total - 10 papers: 1000 marks (including 200 marks for oral test, project work and for item no. 9).
10. An additional subject: 1 paper 100 marks.

This subject might be offered on optional basis from the subjects like the academic subjects as Languages, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, etc. or vocational subjects like sewing and Needle craft, Elements of Agriculture and Horticulture, Pisciculture, Short hand and Type writing etc.¹

From the above mentioned details of the curriculum it has been revealed that much emphasis was given on the teaching of mother tongue or regional language because this language occupied a pivotal place in the child's educational programme. It was the basic ingredient of thought process which gave concrete shape to ideas and conceptions and serves as vehicle of expression in oral, written and other forms. No one could develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas without facility of language. It was essential on the part of the pupil for effective functioning as a citizen. Moreover, language introduced the child to the rich heritage of his peoples' ideas, emotions and aspirations. In it he found natural outlet for the expression of his aesthetic sense and appreciation, a source of joy and creative element. The proper teaching of mother tongue was treated as the foundation of all education since it helps, to a large extent, the blossoming of the intellectual capacity and colourful personality of the people. The syllabus had been drawn up keeping this broad objective in view and arranged in progressive depth and width in consonance with the mental growth of the pupils of different classes.

Though there were various languages included in the list of first language, Bengali was generally accepted as the first language in West Bengal with some exceptions because it is the mother tongue of the vast majority of the people of the state.

A second language was included in the syllabus of the Secondary Education. English was recognised as the second language in West Bengal with some exceptions. But the Kothari Commission recommended that after a sound foundation was laid in mother tongue from class I to IV a third language should be introduced. But in West Bengal the decision was not given proper importance. During this period English was taught from class I. It hindered in the way of achieving sound foundation in mother tongue. Moreover, the children of the primary level could not learn English properly because of lack of their mental maturity of learning a second language. So they could not follow the next higher level in class VI. Anyhow the main objectives of teaching language were described as follows:

(i) To enable the pupils to attain working knowledge of the language from the utilitarian point of view.

(ii) To develop their capacity to express themselves in the language freely, correctly and with proper pronunciation in talks or conversation on ordinary topics.

(iii) To enable pupils to express their ideas of non-technical nature in simple correct language.

(iv) To generate in pupils a love of the language and a desire to cultivate it at leisure and profit.

In West Bengal English was generally accepted as the second language with a little exception. The main object of teaching English was to develop the student's language sense and linguistic sense and his ability to understand, speak, read and write general English. With that end in view English as a second language was taught as an auxiliary language to maintain communicative skill with other parts of India and

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outside. As a result at the end of secondary course, a student ordinarily should have the ability to understand properly English in its simple and non-technical form and express himself freely in simple English.

A third language was included in the syllabus of the new curriculum from class VII to X. The objectives of teaching this third language were

(i) to enable the pupils to acquire basic preliminary knowledge of the language.

(ii) to awaken interest in the pupils to compare and contrast fundamental rules and technicalities of the third language with those of the first and the second.

(iii) to develop pupil's conception of the fact that languages are but sounds produced and guided by definite rules in their articulate and written forms differing in intonation and script formation.

(iv) to develop wider sympathy for and interest in people of different language groups and thus to generate liberty of mind.

Thus the West Bengal Govt. introduced the three language formula but in a different way. It did not accept the recognition of Hindi on a compulsory basis. In class V and VI the two languages were Bengali and English and in classes VII to VIII the three languages were Bengali, English and the third language was either a classical language, or a modern foreign language or a modern Indian language. There was no place for Hindi as a compulsory subject. Moreover, the commission did not accept a classical language as the third language but in most of the schools of West Bengal Sanskrit was offered as the third language. As a result the three language formula was introduced in a modified way.

The Education Commission laid great emphasis on making science an important element in the school curriculum. Teaching of
Science and Mathematics was emphasised on a compulsory basis to all pupils as a part of general education during the first ten years of schooling. In the curriculum of secondary education of West Bengal the teaching of science and mathematics was an integral part.

The objectives of the study of Mathematics were

(i) To develop powers of reasoning,

(ii) To enable pupils to solve speedily the numerical and geometrical problems that arise in their school, family and community activities.

(iii) To encourage pupils to cultivate the qualities of exactness in expression and performance.

Teaching of science was specially emphasised in the curriculum of the new structural pattern of education. In this respect it followed the recommendation of the commission of 1964-66. The development and use of science-based technology which helps modernization of agriculture and the development of industries are the characteristic of a modern society. In this society industry is rooted in science and agriculture has become a branch of science. India in 1960's was not modern in that sense. She was placed at a crucial stage in the process of development and transformation and in this context the role of science was of the utmost importance. So science education must become an integral part of school education\(^1\). Moreover, science strengthens the commitment of man to free enquiry and to the quest for truth as his highest duty and obligation. It loosens the bonds of dogmatism and act as a powerful dispeller of fear and superstition, fatalism and passive resignation. By its emphasis on reason and free enquiry, it even helps to lessen ideological tensions which often arise because of adherence to dogma and fanaticism. So science got an

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important place in the new curriculum of the secondary schools in West Bengal. The description of the curriculum shows that for class VI there was Life Science and for class VII, VIII, IX and X there were both Life Science and Physical Science. Physical Science includes both Physics and Chemistry. Some specific objectives have been mentioned behind teaching the subject. They are:

(i) to initiate pupils into the realm of play and interplay of the laws of sciences in Life and matter around.

(ii) to rouse in the young mind the spirit of enquiry about the nature of matter and forces in nature.

(iii) to develop scientific attitude and enable pupils to understand the important scientific principles involved in the natural phenomenon around.

(iv) to enable pupils to understand with insight the application of science to the service of man.

(v) to develop respect for the philosopher scientists whose contributions have benefited mankind.

(vi) to develop in the pupils a spirit of research and experiments to probe into the hidden treasure of science for enrichment of human life and civilisation.

Life Science has been incorporated in school syllabus to enable the students to have a perspective of human being in relation to the environment and other forms of different patterns of life as exemplified by the plants and animals. The common as well as different phenomenon of life in relation to the structural and behavioural peculiarities are to be integrated in such a manner as to depict a composite and corroborated picture in which man himself forms the central figure. Isolated topics have been selected emphasizing demonstrable examples that would lead
to the development of integrated scientific attitude, as well as comprehensive understanding of science in general and Life Science in particular.

The objectives of teaching this new subject were:

(i) to awaken a pupil's curiosity and interest in the plant, insect and animal life around him in his environment.

(ii) to develop in the pupil habits of accurate observation and of testing knowledge by experiment.

(iii) to arouse awareness about mutual interdependence of life-forms in nature among the pupils.

(iv) to give pupils an intelligent and appreciative insight into the working of life force in nature's kingdom.

(v) to kindle pupil's love for fauna, flora, and avifauna of our country.

(vi) to develop in the pupils of upper forms a spirit of research with a view to enriching human life.

But the proper implementation of the syllabus depended much on the quality and the attitude of the teachers. The spirit of the syllabus rather than its language should be the guiding principle in teaching the subject. Interests and inquisitiveness in the mind of the students should be aroused so that this may be channelised and directed ultimately to the study of science of which he himself forms the central pivot. Teaching of the basic principles should be imparted in the theoretical as well as in practical classes. Laboratory facilities in the shape of specimens, charts, models, instrument and apparatus should be made available to the students. Arrangement should be made for field-study which, in fact, forms the crucial point in the study of Life Science.
But in the classroom teaching the traditional lecture method was commonly employed. Sometimes this was followed by so-called practical work but they do not help to develop a proper grasp of the subject matter or the necessary skill required for analysing and solving problems on the basis of scientific principles and data. It did not create among the students the right attitude towards the process or spirit of scientific inquiry. So an improved method of teaching was very necessary. New text books, teachers' guides and instructional materials which emphasized the investigatory approach among the student were needed. Moreover, the teaching of science should be built round "home technology" (the maintenance and study of gadgets commonly used at home), agricultural implements and industrial tools. The students could also be oriented to experimental science by selecting topics from nature or human inventions. Beside these demonstrations, experiments performed by the teacher or by selected students under the supervision of the teacher were essential as it was an important and integral part of science teaching.

In the teaching of mathematics the old method of mechanical teaching of mathematical computations was emphasised during this time. But for the successful teaching of mathematics emphasis should be given on the understanding of the basic principles.

But the introduction of this new method and approach in the field of science teaching was not an easy task. For the modernization of science teaching the first need was the retraining of the teachers already in schools through refresher courses. The arrangements for this courses was not sufficient in West Bengal. The scope of the training of the new science teachers was not satisfactory.

The next important group of subjects in the curriculum was India and Her People. This was composed of History and Geography.
The Kothari Commission recommended the teaching of History Geography and Civics together as a subject. But in West Bengal History and Geography were taught as two separate subjects and hundred marks was allotted for each. But they were treated under the same group called India and Her people.

The main objectives of teaching history were:

(i) to inculcate love for the mother land, reverence for its past, and a belief in its future destiny as the home of a united co-operative society based on love, truth and justice.

(ii) to awaken in the pupil a proper understanding of his social and geographical environment and an urge to improve it.

(iii) to develop the basic concept of India as a land of unity in diversity and strengthen the growth of national solidarity.

(iv) to broaden the pupils' mind so as to develop mutual respect for various religions and culture patterns.

(v) to imbibe and develop the individual and social virtues that make a man a reliable associate and trusted neighbour.

(vi) to develop a sense of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and inspire a sense of pride and dignity in personal honesty.

The objective of teaching Geography to the pupils of secondary schools was to develop a sense of awareness in them of lives and activities of the people of India and to make them understand their potentialities in the background of natural setting of the country as well as how the people had adjusted their lives with the environment. With this objective in view, a regional approach which synthesised elements of physical geography and human activities, was taken up in framing the syllabus in Geography. Physical features and processes of physical
environment were to be treated in an integrated manner along with the regional geography. Beside these major development projects undertaken in the century for the utilisation of resources in the post-Independent era formed an important part of the syllabus. Moreover, India's relationship with the outer-world including human activities in trade and commerce was also to be emphasised.

The next important item of the curriculum was Work Education, Physical Education and Social Service including School Performance. These were treated as one subject. For Work Education there was 50 marks, for Physical Education 30 and for Social Service and school performance 20 marks. The Education Commission, 1964-66 laid great emphasis on Work Education and Social Service. According to the commission all good and purposeful education should consist of four elements (literacy, numeracy, work-experience and social service). But in the curriculum of the prevailing system the first took most of the time, the second was taken into account but it was very weak but the third and the fourth elements were totally neglected. The commission laid great emphasis on these - the former mainly for relating education to productivity and the later as means of social and national integration. The concept of work experience was based on the basic education launched by Mahatma Gandhi. It might be described as a redefinition of Gandhiji's educational thinking in terms of a society on the road to industrialization. But though the concept of work experience apparently evolved from the valuable experience of Basic Education but Work Experience was not identically the same as Basic Education. Although some of the purposes of Work Experience and Basic Education were common yet there were a few fundamental differences between the two. Philosophically Basic Education indicated a new system of education but Work Experience was related to only some aspects of

education. Beside this in Basic education the traditional emphasis was on simple craft work, but work experience encouraged the use of modern machines driven by electricity and other sources of power in keeping with the requirements of the current technological age. Further in the Orthodox Basic System of education all academic knowledge was required to be correlated with craft activity organised in the school or the physical or social environment of the child. Work experience did not lay the same stress on correlation. So, work experience was participation in productive work in school, in the home, in a workshop, on a farm, in a factory or any other productive situation. The work experience had many valuable objectives such as -

(i) work experience helped a change in attitude of the pupil towards manual work by way of a corrective to purely academic and bookish character of present education.

(ii) it established proper co-ordination between brain, eyes and hand.

(iii) it made school more attractive and education more interesting to children.

(iv) it helped to develop national and social integration by strengthening the links between the individual and the community and by creating bonds of understanding between the educated persons and the masses.

(v) it promoted co-operative attitude in the people.

(vi) it inculcated the same respect for physical workers as one had for the intellectual workers.

(vii) it acquainted the pupils with tools, processes and materials of any technology and imparted skills in using these for productive activities.
(vii) it helped the development of job intelligence and imagination in student workers and the desire to avoid wastage of every kind.

(viii) it established a contact with a hobby which could be developed as a spare or leisure time activity or as a means of livelihood.

The recommendation of the Kothari Commission to introduce Work Experience was slightly changed by the Board of Secondary Education of West Bengal and Work Education was introduced. Work Experience was a process of integrating the different practical experiences of the world of productive work with education. Whereas Work Education was a process of integrating work with theoretical or intellectual education. The purpose of work education was to relate education to life and the process of living and to acquaint the students with the world of work.

The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education suggested two stages of the work education programme. The inclusion of separate programmes for rural and urban areas was very scientific and psychological and at the same time it was very effective because the areas are known to the students.

In the exposure stage the syllabus also included some sort of simple activities in which the pre-adolescent students took part. Because through the guided observation of the productive processes the learners were enthused to go towards deeper understanding. Unless the students used their own hands in whatever activities their maturity and skill permitted, or unless they have the feeling of activity in general, it was not possible for them to realize the full significance of the observed activity. Moreover the pre-adolescents showed eagerness for creative activities and if they were not given enough chances to exercise this creative impulse in suitable activities this would be doomed to be nipped in the bud. Moreover, there was the danger of this creative force to be
manifested in pathological and anti-social behaviour. The simple activities at the exposure stage, suggested were:

1. Spining
2. Paper cutting
3. Cardboard work
4. Broomstick making
5. Clay modelling or plastic work
6. Cookery
7. Taking care of pet animals
8. Washing and drying their own clothes
9. Home Gardening
10. Child Care Training
11. Needle work etc.

The exposure stage was meant for the students of classes VI to VIII. In this stage the students should observe and understand the nature and process of productive activities without getting themselves directly involved in them. This time the concern of the work education was not so much with developing skill in a trade as with providing understanding and orientation of the productive process in general. The productive process at this stage were the following:

For Urban area:
1. Plastic goods manufacture
2. Small Industrial Units
3. Transport (Roadway, Railway, Waterway, Airways)
4. Confectionaries
5. Fruit preservation
6. Ceramics

For Rural area:
1. Agriculture farming
2. Animal Husbandry
3. Transport system (Bullock cart, Cycle rickshaw, Roadway, Railway, Waterway)
4. Rice mill
5. Bee-keeping and poultry keeping
6. Molasses manufacture

The second stage i.e. the involvement stage was meant for classes IX and X. At this stage the students were expected to take active part in the productive process. It was also expected that the students would produce something in course of completion of their work project. At the outset the selection of work projects was not very pinpointed. At least 45 projects were there and the schools selected two or three projects haphazardly. Through experience the board selected the following eleven projects of which the students could select one project and could appear at the final Madhyamik Pariksha with that project as his Work Education Project. The eleven projects earmarked by the Board were as follows:

1. Soap, phenyle and ink making (any two)
2. Sewing and embroidery
3. Vegetable and flower cultivation
4. Kitchen Gardening
5. Electrical wiring and electrical gadget repairing or transistor making and repairing
6. Cultivation of cereals - Rice and Wheat
7. Cultivation of Jute
8. Spinning and Weaving
9. Dyeing and painting
10. Carpentry
11. Pottery
The methodology adopted for teaching the subject was more or less the project method. The students were expected to take active part in planning, procuring the implements and tools required, collection or purchasing the raw materials, executing the productive process, giving final form of the finished product including bottling or packaging, storing, costing. They were expected to take part in the discussion of the problems faced by them and suggest further improvements.

Thus the Work Education was the integration of productive labour into the system of school education with a view to inculcating in the pupil the desired attitude, skill and knowledge. Productive labour through work education provided a means for inward growth of the pupil as a step towards intellectual maturity. Thus work education was neither the craft education, recommended by the Mudaliar Commission in which the suggested craft was a valuable medium for the emotional development of the pupil nor it was a vocational training which prepared the students for a vocation. It aimed at giving the pupil requisite training through a project in a craft or trade requiring work by hand and thus to acquaint him with the concept of productive labour to enable him to combine theory with practice and apply the knowledge acquired to everyday life.1.

The success of work education depended on the co-operation of all teachers. Though there was a Work Education teacher in a school other teachers should also take part in the programme to make it a successful venture. For such involvement of teachers two periods were to be assigned to a teacher with corresponding adjustment in the total period of work per week.2

1 A Brochure on Work Education and Physical Education, West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, P-28.
2 G.O. No 772-Edu (S) dt 8th July, 1974
Thus a very wise programme of work education was included in the curriculum of new pattern but it was a great failure. The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education decided to abandon the subject but due to heavy opposition from different corners it was given a place in the curriculum of the Madhyamik Pariksha as an additional subject. It was of course, included in the syllabus of classes VI to VIII as compulsory subject.

The need of including physical education in the curriculum was greatly felt much earlier. The Education Commission also laid great importance to it. But the Scheme of Physical Education which emphasized only the physical fitness values and ignored its educational value must be discarded. It must be emphasized that such education contributed not only to physical fitness but also to physical efficiency, mental alertness and the development of certain qualities like perseverance, team spirit, leadership, obedience to rules, moderation in victory and balance in defeat.¹ Thus the aim of physical education was to effect some beneficial action upon the physical, mental and moral (or physiological and anatomical, neurological and psychological) development of children. Briefly stated, the aims of well-taught lesson in physical education should be:

(a) to assist the growth of the body in such a way that each organ is aided in adopting the position in which there is no interference due to displacement of pressure;

(b) to assist the development of the efficiency of all organs through muscular activity;

(c) to help in the co-ordination of muscles and nerve centres, so that complex muscular movements become easy, quick and intelligent response to the needs of a situation is ensured.

(d) to give opportunities for the exercise of certain characteristics which will be of value to the individual and to his community in after life. Habit is of very great importance in the determination of character, and practice in good habits is a definite educational factor. By the lessons of physical education certain good habits can be formed such as obedience, self control, co-operative efforts, and fair play.

With these objectives in view the curriculum of Physical Education was adopted in the state. There were two sets of activities: one for boys and another for girls. The activities for boys were grouped in the following eight units according to their broad characteristics:

1. Formal activity:
   (a) Callisthenics
   (b) Marching
   (c) Light Apparatus Drills
      (Lezium, Indian Clubs, Dumbell, Wand etc.)
   (d) Yogic exercises
   (e) Indigenous exercises
      (Dands, Baithaks, Surya Namaskar etc.)

2. Individual Activity:
   (a) Gymnastics (Floor and Apparatus)
   (b) Athletics
   (c) Aquatics

3. Organised Games:
   (a) Football
   (b) Hockey
   (c) Cricket
   (d) Volleyball
   (e) Basketball
   (f) Kabadi
   (g) Khokho
   (h) Softball
(i) Tenikoit  
(j) Badminton  
(k) Table Tennis  

4. Games of low organisation:
   (a) Hindusthan Ball  
   (b) Net Ball  
   (c) Throw Ball  
   (d) Paddle Tennis  
   (e) Dariabandha  
   (f) Relay Games  
   (g) Tag/Chasing games up  
   (h) Other lead games  

5. Defensive activity:
   (a) Lathi  
   (b) Judo  
   (c) Wrestling  

6. Rhythmic activity:
   (a) Folk dance and songs (Bratachari, Tipri etc.)  
   (b) Action songs  

7. Outdoor activity:
   (a) Camping  
   (b) Excursion  
   (c) Hiking  
   (d) Mountaineering  
   (e) Trekking  

8. National Ideals and Citizenship development activity:
   (a) National and community songs  
   (b) Celebration of National Festival and School Functions
(c) Personal and Community Hygiene
and good habits

(d) First Aid

Activities were directed to be selected from among the suggested activities under different broad units according to available facilities (e.g., ground gymnasium for hall, apparatus, finance etc.). Although as many activities as possible were encouraged provision for at least one activity from each of the broad units should be made; and evaluation would be made on any one of the activities taught from each unit.

There was instruction that suitable programme should be adopted for the handicapped and the test battery should be modified accordingly.

A different syllabi was framed for girls. In framing the syllabi due consideration was given to the following factors:

(a) Anatomical difference
(b) Physiological difference
(c) Emotional difference

The activities for girls were listed under eight categories:

1. Introductory activities - They were active physical work. Under this group the following should be taught,
   (a) Fundamental movement e.g. walking, crawling, rolling, running, skipping, sliding, hopping, jumping, galloping.
   (b) Fundamental formations : e.g. Line, file, circle, half cricles, concentric-circles, square etc.
   (c) Posture training
   (d) Marching
(2) Exercise and Developmental (Exercise for the development of muscles and organs):

Exercises are recommended for each class for developing strength, alertness, agility, endurance, flexibility, and all-round physical fitness. Exercise and developmental categories consisted of the following exercises:

(a) Arm and shoulder exercise
(b) Leg and balance exercise
(c) Trunk exercises (dorsal, lateral, abdominal as far as possible)
(d) One combination of exercise (strength, stamina, balance and endurance)
(e) One agility exercise.

3. Skill practice
4. Group activities
5. Games
6. Rhythmical activities
7. Camping and ontime activities (practical projects, first aid, community singing, singing of National Anthem, and emotional and National Integration songs)
8. National Ideals and citizenship developing activity
   (a) National and community songs
   (b) Celebration of National Festivals and school functions
   (c) Personal and community Hygiene and good habits
   (d) First Aid etc.

The syllabus was framed according to a well-thought out programme. Its proper execution would have helped in the
development of physical fitness and mental and moral development of the children.

But unfortunately it could not be executed properly. Lack of proper equipments in the school was one of the major reasons of its failure. Proper delivery of the lessons in the syllabus needed help of different types of equipments but most of the schools could not procure these equipments for paucity of fund.

In most of the schools there was no teacher for physical education but without the help of trained and efficient teachers physical education programme could not be made successful. There were many schools where the responsibility of physical education was entrusted upon teacher who were not trained. For these teachers arrangements should have been made for opening short course training centres in different districts. But unfortunately there was no such arrangement.

In many schools particularly in the schools of the urban areas there was no play ground. Separate space for physical education was a far cry in most of the urban schools. Without such space the successful implementation of the physical education programme was impossible.

Above all lack of motivation of the teachers of physical education was the prime cause of failure of physical education programme in the schools. Without regular and continuous activities it was not possible to make the programme successful. Most of the teachers in different schools were unwilling to bear the hardship of taking physical education classes under the open sky. As a result the period allotted for physical education became the classes for gossip and mischief making for the students and mid-day snap for the teachers. The teacher developed the habit of becoming active for a week or so before the final practical examination of the Madhyamik Pariksha. The technic of preparing the students anyhow presentable to the external examiner became the practice of the teachers.
The commission recommended the programme of social service in secondary school curriculum. It emphasised that some form of social and national service should be made obligatory for all students and should form an integral part of education at all stages. This could become an instrument to build character, improve discipline, inculcate faith in the dignity of manual labour and develop a sense of social responsibility.

On the basis of this idea West Bengal Board of Secondary Education included an item called social service and school performance. The objectives of inclusion this item in the curriculum were:

(i) to inculcate in the students love to fellow people and the country.
(ii) to rouse in them a desire to be a useful member of the society and contribute his best for the common good.
(iii) to enable them to realise the utility of team work, tolerance and sympathetic understanding.
(iv) to inspire the students to develop confidence, self respect and a sense of dignity of labour.

Some sort of social services were included in the syllabus of social service such as Nursing, First Aid, Cleaning the area, Teaching the unlettered, Observance of Hero Day, National Integration Day, Social and Religious Reformer's Day, Science Day etc.

Along with this another programme of school performance was included. This programme included school decoration, School Cleaning, School Magazine, News Bulletin, Running Common Room and Study Room, Drama, Debate, Elocution, Recitation, Drawing competition, Music competition etc.

These activities were really educationally significant for the students. This type of work could cultivate in the students the habit of
work and the dignity of labour. It also helped saving some sort of expenditure which could be utilized for providing certain amenities for students. Besides saving money it provided valuable experience. It helped to develop the habit of self-help and manual work.

Unless proper execution of the programme was done it would not yield good educational result. For this the students should be motivated but generally students are inclined to academic pursuits more than productive type of work. The guardians also showed interest towards academic studies. They generally thought of higher education for their wards and they emphasised on literacy and numeracy subjects. Their inclination influenced the students to a great extent.

Secondly these work was not possible to do for a single teacher in a school. For successful implementation of work education participation of all teachers in a school was necessary but the teachers were not interested. They were unwilling to go beyond the area of their own subject. Many of the teachers were overloaded with their own assignment.

Thirdly, for successful implementation of the programme proper training of the teachers was essentially required. In a school one or two trained teachers could take the leadership in training their colleagues. But in our schools such atmosphere was almost nonexistent.

Before the appointment of the Education Commission, the evils of Examination became very prominent. Examination was no doubt a part and parcel of the education process in all the stages. It exercised great influence on the pupils' study habits and the teachers' methods of instruction and thus helped not only to measure educational achievement but also to improve it. The techniques of evaluation were of collecting evidence about the students' development in desirable directions. These techniques should therefore, be valid, reliable,
objective and practicable. But the system enlisted at that period was the written examinations but there were several important aspects of the student's growth that could not be measured by written examinations. Other methods such as observation techniques, oral tests and practical examinations were necessary for collecting evidence for this purpose. Moreover, apart from the academic growth there was also the question of measuring and recording the student's progress in other directions - physical, social, emotional etc. The introduction of Cumulative Record Card could serve the purpose.

Another defect was the system of marking. It was unrealistic in the sense that in actual practice the human mind, which makes the judgement, is not capable of discriminating between the achievement of two examinees securing 47% and 48%. The human mind can only classify the examinees into a small number of broad categories. Only possible solution is the introduction of grades. The result of internal assessment and external evaluation should be expressed in terms of grades.

Moreover, there was only one examination for promotion to the next higher class at the end of an academic year. But a single examination gave rise to chance factor. So the system was to be replaced by a system of continuous internal assessment. Continuous evaluation throughout the year supplemented by an examination was the best practice which could take away from an examination the evil of chance factor.

The Education Commission (1964-66) dealt with these problems of evaluation and made some important recommendations on the line mentioned above. Most important among them were:

(i) introduction of Cumulative Record Card.

(ii) introduction of scientific scoring techniques to eliminate subjectivity in scoring.
(iii) Introduction of oral tests and practical examination.

(iv) Improvement of written examination so that it could reliably measure the educational achievement of the child.

(v) Introduction of continuous internal assessment.

In West Bengal there was an attempt to reform the existing evaluation system on the basis of the recommendations of the commission. The introduction of oral tests in different subjects (such as Bengali, Physical Science, Life Science, History and Geography) was a new feature. It helped to measure the I. Q. of the child, his motivation, his activity level, alertness and awareness, his consciousness. It also considered the memory functions of a child\(^1\). Second important feature of the examination reform was the maintainance of class record in some subjects such as Physical Science, Life Science, History and Geography. At the time of examination in the schools those class records should be consired while assessing the students. During the Madhyamik Examination those class records should be placed before the external examiners. To begin with oral examinations in different subjects were taken by the external examiners but subsequently internal oral examinations were introduced. Internal oral examination in the first language was introduced in 1982, in History and Geography from 1980 and in Life Science and Physical Science from 1981.

The importance of oral examinations and the significance of its inclusion in the curriculum were diluted when internal Oral Test was introduced in place of Tests taken by the external examiners.

There was a public examination entitled Madhyamik Pariksha (Secondary Examination) which marked the end of the course of Secondary Education of five years from class VI to X. Except the oral

\(^1\) Prof. Biswanath Roy, Field Advisor NCERT - Oral Examination and the Teaching learning process, Bulletin, West Bengal Head Masters' Association Vol. (XXXV), P-16.
examination carrying 10% or 20% marks the rest was written examination where the setting of question papers was very important. There were several defects in the question papers. The paper setters were appointed on the basis of seniority, very few of them possessed the necessary knowledge and skill in the construction of valid and reliable tests. To make them competent in this regard an intensive training programme of the paper setters must be organised by the Secondary Board. But the attempt in this respect during this period was not satisfactory.

Secondly, the marking system of this examination was not scientific. So the examination scores became more and more unreliable. The introduction of scientific scoring procedures was essential so that there might be optimum reliability and objectivity in the assessment of the candidates’ performance. The marks of different subjects should be added after standardization and the determination of cut-off points.

The number of students appeared in the examination became remarkably large during this time. So the task of getting the answer scripts properly valued and of processing the results efficiently within a given time were becoming more and more difficult. So it became necessary that this process should be mechanised in order to make it more accurate and expeditious.

The matter which was more important was the large incidence of failures in the external examination at the end of the school stage. The analysis of the result of 1976 revealed the fact. In this year the number of candidates appeared in the Madhyamik Pariksha were 1,43,283 and the candidates passed were 66,209. This failure had a great demoralizing effect on the unsuccessful candidates. Moreover, the failure of such a large number of students, particularly after screening year after year by means of annual and other school examinations, was a sad reflection on the methods of teaching as well as the system of examination.
Again for the successful implementation of the examination internal assessment conducted by individual schools was emphasised by different commissions. It could evaluate all those aspects of the student's growth that were measured by the external examination and also those personality traits, interests and attitudes which could not be assessed by it. Internal assessment built into the total educational programme of the school could improve rather than only certifying the level of achievement of the student. But the programme of these internal tests were not seriously taken by the teachers of all schools in West Bengal. Some renowned schools responded to this programme; others were indifferent. They were not willing to take this responsibility and thought it to be an extra load. There was no compulsion about this. The sincere effort of the teachers, the supervision of the Headmaster and the Board were necessary for the proper implementation of the programme. Another important step which should be taken was the regular inspections of the schools to review the internal assessment made and to examine the correlation between the internal and external assessments. If there was over marking by the schools the whole programme was useless.

As regards the class-examination there were generally two examinations - Half-yearly and Annual. In some schools there were First Terminal, Second Terminal and Annual Examination. The promotion to the next higher classes depended in most cases only on Annual Examination. This was not scientific and there was a great scope of chance factor. So internal tests throughout the year should be arranged and the result of these tests and the Annual Examination should be considered during the class promotion. Though the idea was there the scheme was not properly executed all over the province.

During this time it was accepted as an established fact that of all the different factors which influenced the quality of education and
its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers were undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing was more important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality recruits to the teaching profession, providing them with the best possible professional preparation and creating satisfactory conditions of work in which they could be fully effective. For this purpose it was necessary to make an intensive and continuous effort to raise the economic, social and professional status of teachers in order to attract young men and women of ability to the profession.

In the above context the commission recommended adoption of the following steps as measures of improving teachers' status:

(i) the parity of remuneration should be ensured among
   (a) the teachers of schools under different management.
   (b) the teachers at different levels - primary, secondary and university.
   (c) the teachers of different provinces.

(ii) Teachers should be safeguarded from the price rise. Teachers' salary must be linked with cost of living in order to make it adjusted to the rise in price. For this purpose the commission recommended that the salaries should be reviewed every five years.

(iii) As regards the Dearness allowance it recommended that their allowance should be paid to all teachers in parity with the government servants.

(iv) The Triple Benefit Scheme of provident fund, pension and Insurance to be adopted for all teachers.

(v) The normal retirement age of the teachers should be sixty years and there should be provision for extension upto 65 years provided the
person was physically fit and mentally alert to discharge his duties efficiently.

Thus West Bengal reorganised the secondary education system on the line of the recommendations of the Kothari Commission. But so far as improvement of teachers' status is concerned the performance of the state during this period was not tangible.

As regards improvement of pay scale the change was not satisfactory. A comparative study of the pay scale of Teachers would reveal the fact (included in chapter VI). There were again wide differences in the pay scales of teachers working in different levels and institutions under different managements.

The economic condition of the teachers of the secondary schools was precarious during this period because teachers working in about 70% of the non-government affiliated schools did not get their pay packet according to their scale of pay regularly. Many of the teachers got only the Government Dearness Allowance which was meagre. It was not at the same rate as the employees of the State Government.

Moreover, the service security of the teachers and the non-teaching staff of the schools was not stable. In 1969 the service security rule of the teachers and the non-teaching staff was framed during the United Front Government. But this Government existed for a very short period. After this period when Congress Ministry came back to power the job security of the teachers and the non-teaching staff depended on the sweet will of the Managing Committee which comprised mainly of the vested interest. The teaching community could not get any right to highlight the real condition relating to their problems. Even teachers had to lose job on Government circular for taking part in a day's cease work. Another shameful step the government took was the police verification report which was made necessary for confirmation of service of the teachers.1

1 Bhabesh Moitra - Dui Dristi Bhangi, Dui Niti, Shiksha Prasange (Bengali), P. 152.
As regards the retirement benefit the teachers were not satisfied with the existing benefit. They were anxious about their future which disturbed their day to day work. Both the Mudaliiar Commission (1952-53) and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) recommended the introduction of Triple Benefit in the form of Provident Fund, Pension, and Insurance as the retirement benefit of the teachers of secondary schools. But the West Bengal Government took no positive step to introduce the scheme in non-government affiliated schools. There was no improvement in this field from the arrangement prevailing in 1960's. Provident fund (not contributory), pension and gratuity were provided. The amount of pension was not satisfactory. It was calculated on the basis of last three years emoluments. The rate of pension is mentioned below:

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Thus the secondary education system was reorganised on the basis of the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1964-66.

But the new pattern of 10 +2 + 3 structure was being debated in India. One of the criticism was that even within the existing structure there was so much to do to improve the standard and quality of education that the change of structure should not be given priority. Some of the guardians and the general public were even critical of having undertaken too many changes in the education of our country within such a brief period since independence. They were therefore allergic to allow their children to be treated any more as "guinea-pigs".

Moreover, there was a great need for making the secondary stage terminal through the programme of vocationalisation. There should be a scope for those larger number of students to whom the Madhyamik Examination was a terminal one and who entered life after this examination. But in the new pattern the students were given general, education consisting of Language, Science, Social Science. The new curriculum included some sort of productive work but the purpose was not fulfilled.

The election manifesto which contained the political, economic, social and educational programme of the Left Alliance under the leadership of the Communist Party of India was overwhelmingly accepted by the people of West Bengal. After assuming power in 1977 the Left Front Government took positive steps in giving shape to their educational programme. The next chapter deals with the promise and problems of the educational policy of the Left Front Government particularly regarding the secondary education of West Bengal.

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1 P.D. Shukla - Towards the New Pattern in India, P. 15.