CHAPTER XII

(B)

GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE AREA
UNDER STUDY

Introduction:

Education is a preparation for life. It enables its recipients to tackle the problems of life they are facing. It improves the quality of man and his effectiveness in economic activities. As such it is rightly deemed as a human investment.

Village school is one of the three basic institutions, other two being village co-operative and Panchayat, entrusted with the task of hastening the process of rural development. As such it is better positioned to function as a dynamic centre for the whole village community. It is the hub round which the programme of social change revolves. One of the fundamental aspects of the community development programme is the education of rural people. The school is expected to educate the village community in understanding and adopting various innovations for its own development and should make clear to the community that education has something concrete to contribute to its welfare.

Emphasis has been given from the very beginning for the rapid spread of primary education in the age group of 6-11
years and this purpose is being served through the expansion and development of primary education in rural areas by block agency, though prior to the inception of the programme, education was given place in the general development activities of the district administration, concerning education. The importance of primary education is rightly viewed by Harbison and Myers, "With universal primary education achieved, major attention can be focussed on qualitative improvement in secondary education and the expansion of higher education through junior colleges, higher technical institution and universities."¹ The role of education becomes more important in view of the fast changing role of farmer in India. He is not only the producer of food for the urban areas but is a key figure in the economic growth of the country. The vision of a revolution in agriculture should be first seen by him. This can be done only by a educated farmer.

In the present survey an attempt has been made to evaluate the educational activities in the blocks under study. It may be borne in the mind at the outset that the enquiry has been limited to the activities that formed the special features of the blocks. As the survey was conducted during May and June, the information regarding the attendance of the students and increase in their number could not be available as the schools were closed. Therefore, the following analysis is based on the information available in the block reports and the reports from the Assistant Districts Education Officers in the rural areas at their headquarters. In most of the cases the figures of pre-inception year

¹ Quoted by Shri V.S. Rao in "Education in Rural India." Kurukshetra June 1965, p. 2
could not be available to measure the impact of educational facilities.

**Schools in the Blocks:**

The 1959 Conference of Development Commissioners at Mysore recommended that the schools should make a three-fold contribution, "(i) provision of education to village children in accordance with the needs of rural life. (ii) extension of educational facilities to youth and adults during school hours and (iii) enlisting close association of villagers to make the school a community centre." Thus village school has been envisaged to function not merely as an institution for educating the rural children but also to serve as one of the local agencies for educating and developing the community in the various spheres of rural life. Therefore, it becomes quite essential that there must be schools in the villages or within their easy reach. In the survey an attempt has been made to know the number of schools in the blocks area.

The table on the next page depicts the extent of coverage of the block areas by rural school. The table shows the number of schools of different categories per village (1966) and per thousand of total population as well as per thousand school going population (1961).

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Table No. 12:6

Table showing the number of schools per village (1966) per thousand population (1961) and per thousand school going children (1961) by blocks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Average primary per thousand of 1961</th>
<th>Average others per thousand of school of 1961</th>
<th>Average per thousand population going child population</th>
<th>( \text{ren.} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katni.</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sehora.</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabalpur.</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khurai.</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohli.</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banda.</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendukheda.</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabera.</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathariaya.</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narsimhapur.</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goteaon.</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kareli.</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All blocks</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.03</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table reveals that in 1966 average number of primary school per village was 0.36. In all the 12 blocks there were 825 primary schools covering 2368 villages. The number of primary school also includes the basic type of primary schools.
The number of primary schools per thousand population (1961) was 1.04. The total number of school going children in the age group 6-11 years in all the 771 primary schools was 75705. The number of students could not be available in one block hence number of primary schools in that block has been deducted from the total primary schools in order to calculate the correct average figure. Thus on an average there were 33.2 students per primary school. The average number of primary schools per thousand of school going children comes to 11.03 only.

Other schools included middle and higher secondary schools in the blocks under study. The total number of such schools comes to 165 and on an average there was 0.07 school per village. The average number of such educational institution in the blocks under study worked out to 0.20 per thousand population (1961). The number of such schools per thousand population shows variation from 0.09 in Banda block to 0.36 in Goteagao block.

As regards the number of primary school per village the lowest number (0.13) per village and (0.69) per thousand population have been reported from Jabalpur block. It may be borne in mind that largest number of villages was also in Jabalpur block. But the lowest number of primary school per thousand school going children (7.6) has been reported from Kareli block. The figures of one block, Jabera, were not available in this respect. The highest number of primary school per village (0.53) per thousand of 1961 population (17.9) have been reported from Katni, Naraimhapur and Tandukheda blocks respectively. The ratio of boys and girls students in all the primary school was on an average 5:2.
Number of Teachers and their Training:

There were 2270 teachers in 771 primary schools of 11 blocks and the average number of teacher per school comes to 2.9 only. The ratio of men and women teachers worked out to 6:1 in primary schools. Out of total men teachers, 11.6% were untrained while only 2.4% women teachers were untrained.

Educational Facilities in the Villages Surveyed:

Out of the 24 villages, there were primary schools in 15 villages and middle schools in 4 villages. Except two which were run by government, all the primary schools were run by Janpad Sabha while all the middle schools were run by government. There were no school in five villages but there were approachable schools in nearby villages within the radius of one kilometre. As regards the number of teachers, five primary schools were having one teacher each while in others more than one teacher were employed. The number of students could not be available in schools due to summer vacation.

The average number of primary schools and other schools per village in the villages surveyed worked out to 0.62 and 0.16 respectively compared to 0.36 and 0.20 the average figure of all the blocks. In the villages surveyed the figures of primary schools per village is higher and other schools per village lower than the average figure of all the blocks.

School Buildings:

Out of all the schools in the villages six schools
had no government or Janpad building but held in the private houses of the village Patel or other man. The middle schools too had no building with the result that there was acute shortage of accommodation for primary schools. It was appreciable to note that the villagers had constructed the school building with their volunteer labour in some primary school, making a addition to it. Most of the buildings were reported not to be in good condition.

Basic schools in the area:-

Attempt has been made to convert primary schools into basic schools during the last few years. A basic type of school is one where the teaching includes some forms of manual and practical work in the shape of a craft. According to the reports available out of 12 blocks in 8 blocks only 77 primary schools or 9.4% have been converted into basic type of schools. The average number of such school for these blocks comes to 3.5 only. It is not possible to comment on the working and syllabus of such schools as in all the 24 villages surveyed, no basic type of school existed.

Construction of School buildings by the Blocks:-

Attempt has been made to construct the school buildings by the blocks. In all the blocks assistance has been given for this purpose. Generally it has been 50% grant of the total cost of the building. It was reported that after the Chinese aggression in 1962 this assistance has been stopped. The average number of such buildings is 9 in all the blocks. The 50% of the total cost has been met by the village people either in cash
contribution or in the form of labour. Out of all the villages surveyed, 6 villages have got such buildings and in one village this building was half built as after the stop of grant, the village people could not get the same but they also did not complete it. They complained that their share of contribution had been exhausted and government must have come forward to complete the building. Most of the buildings were in need of repairing which were quite old and others needed extension as accommodation was quite insufficient.

Recreational Facilities in the Block Schools:

No doubt, recreational facilities are quite essential to boost up the attendance in the schools. Such facilities provide charm to the students and give them a wider scope to develop their personality. It is more important than simply to teach the students according to traditional way. The survey shows that no such facilities existed in the schools of the blocks. Only in 7 blocks some material for playing had been provided such as football, swing and ring tennis etc. Kabaddi was very common in rural areas. Sports were arranged in the schools. Most of the schools had taken materials relating to recreation from the blocks on the basis of 50% subsidy.

The provision of mid-day meal and free distribution of skimmed milk powder to the school going children has not been reported in any of the blocks though distribution of latter has been in vogue in previous years.

It may be concluded that recreational facilities
in the schools are quite scanty and the equipments are also not properly maintained.

**Villager's Attitude Towards Schools and Education:**

The village people were interviewed on the aspect of education. They were asked to express their attitude and suggestions. They told that they were enjoying the education facilities within their easy reach and such facilities had increased to a larger extent compared to previous years when they themselves had to suffer from illiteracy due to the lack of schools. But now they are sending their children to school with great eagerness. People of all the castes are getting their children educated in the schools, even some of them have also sent their children to the towns for further education. On the issue to recreational facilities in the schools, the people were not satisfied. They were asked whether still they thought it better to employ their children in agriculture than to send them to school. All unanimously preferred sending them to school.

Extending their suggestions they told that the standards of education was coming down. Now the students had no fear and regard for their teachers. The teachers except few, did not impart the instructions sincerely in the schools and so the students were not able to learn what they ought to have in a certain age. They also realised that the child today is over-burdened with the subjects in the school. They seemed to prefer the knowledge of language and mathematics only in primary schools.

Out of total, 60% respondents strongly complained
the shortage of the teachers in their schools. Ten percent demanded the upgrade of primary schools into middle schools in their villages while 30 per cent wanted the extension and repairing of the old buildings. Actually much difficulty has been realised in the schools where there was only one teacher. From the response of the people, the general impression was formed that there were many programmes and activities in the schools in the first of second stage of community development programme but now they had ceased due to non-availability of funds.

On an average 20 teachers had been given training in the philosophy and working of community development programme in each block. It was known that teachers have not been taking much interest in the community development and other rural programmes. Indeed this is not a good picture of our school teachers. They must extend their full co-operation in community development programme.

Impact of Educational Facilities:

In order to know the impact of educational facilities, an attempt was made to collect the data of the the pre-inception years in the blocks. But such data could not be available as there was no practice of collecting such figures in the block office. Only recently they have started doing it. The District Education Officers also could not provide such figures. Keeping in view this limitation, only 5 blocks could provide the statistics of education and schools for the year 1961 and on the basis of this it has been calculated that there has been 25 per cent increase in number of schools and students attending them.
A mass consciousness has awakened in the villages and the people now attach more mind and importance to send their children to school, of course they do not take active interest in the affairs of schools and in what their children have learnt there.

The role of village school as a community centre is to be given practical shape by its teachers and they have to be helped in developing the attitudes and skills required for it.