CHAPTER III

POLICY PERSPECTIVE
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Policy refers to the intention of the government about what to do and what not to do, to enact decisions and to implement strategies. Legislation provides the most obvious example of these intentions. It is also considered as the most acknowledged rule of conduct that guides administrative decisions. Educational Policy is essentially a principle or group of related principles with their consequent rules of action and conditions that ensure successful achievement of certain educational objectives. Thus, policy must be consistent and integrated in such a manner that it contributes to the accomplishment of the desired objectives. A well planned policy defines the ends to be achieved but does not prescribe any detailed procedure to attain them.

Policy also supplies standard guidelines to help an administrator to plan and act. It is to be distinguished from goals or objectives on the one hand and operative steps on the other. Thus, making every person educated or literate in the country is an objective and compulsory primary education is a policy designed to realise this goal by taking certain steps like opening schools, adult education centres, creating necessary infrastructure etc.  

The shaping of education policy is one of the paramount concerns not only of all the developing countries but also of the developed ones. It is not something to be rigidly prescribed for all times to come. On the contrary it is something ever-growing, ever-evolving and ever-changing. Since education is an agent of change and an instrument of social transformation, it gets intimately linked with the aim of education i.e., the process of social development, in general. Education is one of the major factors to bring planned change in any society.

Every change in policy has to consider the experience of the past, the situation prevailing in the present and the hopes entertained for the future. A policy cannot be considered in isolation, cut off from the environment in which it is evolved. At the same time environmental factors such as, geographic, demographic variables, social, political and economic systems etc. place limits and constraints upon it. The past, present and future too have bearing on policy formulation and implementation. Sometimes social, economic and religious elements cause a passive acceptance of policy decisions and certain groups of the society do not expect much from the system.

Thus, policy perspective requires more analytic approach in the context of changing goals, shifting environment and varying circumstances.


of the society. The role of the state in this regard is predominant and significant because of its functions with man power planning, addressing social priorities, controlling people's expectations and solving social problems. Since India is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious society, social characteristics, values governing them have important bearings on all policies including education policy. Educational Policy and values underlying them interact with moods and fashions of the period and it will be difficult to identify the leading values. In fact, all educational values have social and economic connotations when they are translated into operational statements of policy.\textsuperscript{6}

In simple words, values are either 'basic' or 'secondary' i.e. instrumental or consequential values. Then the basic value is held to be right by those who believe it. The concepts of equality of opportunity, freedom,

social security or education may be held as 'basic' values. Basic values may have several defences in terms of evidence that lead to good or otherwise desirable or undesirable consequences. But these are necessary for policy statement support.  

In India, though education has always been conceived as a top priority item in various policy statements of the government after Independence, yet this crucial area of concern has continued to suffer for a variety of social, economic and other reasons. Our study deals with Policy and Administration of Adult Education in Haryana; and this state, like other states, is covered under the umbrella of National Education Policy.

In this chapter we shall discuss the Adult Education Policy of the Government of India in two parts. Part I deals with the Adult Education Policy during Pre-Independent era and Part II


has been devoted to Post-Independent period.

POLICY DURING PRE-INDEPENDENCE:

Transformation of Indian society from medieval to the modern pattern during British rule and resultant growth of our educational system has witnessed various socio-economic and political changes. The British Government shaped and influenced the educational development of India in various ways.\(^9\) It has been pointed out that education during the British time was in the first instance ignored, then violently and successfully opposed, then conducted on a system now universally admitted to be erroneous and finally placed on present footing.\(^10\)

In order to understand the educational policy of today, it will be most appropriate

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9. S.K. Saini, Development of Education in India, Socio-Economic and Political Perspectives, New Delhi, Cosmo Publication, 1980, p. 35.

to know the background of the existing educational system and its development in phases. Historically, the development of educational system can be traced from the days of the East India Company. The Company like any other commercial concern aimed at pecuniary gain by trade. It did not recognise the promotion of education among the natives of India as a part of its duty. Missionaries who came to this country along with European traders introduced a new phase in education.\textsuperscript{11} The fundamental aim of these missionaries was to propagate Christian religion through a European mode of education. In order to execute this design, they established primary schools and studied Indian languages for translating the Bible into indigenous languages. Though the East India Company was established solely for the purpose of trade, yet it had to mould its fundamental policy to some extent on religious lines. These efforts of the company were mainly

directed to the spread of Christianity.  

Firstly, the Company sent some priests to India for the spiritual welfare of its Christian servants but in the year 1659 the Directors of East India Company considered it desirable to send missionaries by each of the ships coming to India for propagating Christianity. But in the course of time the Company gave up this policy and tried to adopt a policy of religious neutrality. In 1670, at Madras, the first school was established for the education of the children of the Portuguese, British and Eurasian Public servants. The Company's first attention towards education was drawn in 1698 when the British Parliament inserted a clause in its Charter enjoining upon the company to maintain religious preachers and teachers in their factories in India. The Charter further directed the Company to provide soldiers and workers in factories. This, consequently, led to the establishment

of free charity institutions. Some schools were opened in Madras in 1715, Bombay (1718) and in Calcutta in 1731. Later on these charity institutions were founded at Tanjore and Kanpur and their main aim was to teach 3R's i.e., reading, writing and arithmetic to the children of the English and the Anglo Indian Community and other poor children.

In 1757, after the Battle of Plassy, the Company took the administrative reigns of entire Bengal in its hand but it did not shoulder the direct responsibility of education. It, however, did not take away the grant of land which the institutions had been enjoying for long. In the year 1781 'Calcutta Madarsah' had been founded, the aim of which was to qualify the sons of Mohammedan gentlemen for lucrative offices. Later on in 1791 like Calcutta Madarsah, Jonathan Duncan founded the Benares Sanskrit College for Hindus. The aim of this institution

was identical with that of the Calcutta Madarsah. Thereafter, in 1800 Fort William College was opened in Calcutta and Fort St. George College (1818) at Madras to provide education to the recruits of the Company in Indian languages and customs. However, no efforts were made to cater the educational needs of the native Indians.¹⁵

Though the East India Company had nothing but apathy to educational requirements of the Indians, the channels of indigenous education were never dry. Institutions like Muslim Muktabs and Madarsahs, Hindu Pathshalas, the Tol of Bengal were already in existence. But the first systematic effort in this regard was made by the British Parliament when it renewed the Charter Act 1813 and inserted a clause in the Charter of the East India Company to undertake the responsibility of education in India. The Act stipulated a condition that a sum of not less than one lakh of Rupees was

to be spent every year for the promotion of education among the inhabitants of British Territory in India. The Act presented three propositions for consideration; (a) the encouragement of learning among the natives of India; (b) revival and improvement of literature and; (c) promotion of knowledge of science. The Act also encouraged the Missionaries to go to India for spreading education. The Charter Act threw open the gateway of India to all the missionaries of England. Thus, it is clear that they wanted to strengthen the link between the Indians and their officials by adopting a system of common education. However, the Charter Act remained inoperative till 1823. Later, some progress was made by presidency governments of Bengal, Madras and Bombay in the field of education.

18. Ibid. p. 20.
After the expiry of twenty years, the Charter Act 1813 was renewed and modified by that of 1833. According to this Charter, the missionaries of other countries were also allowed to carry on their work in India. Further, it announced that Indians will not be discriminated on the basis of religion, place of birth, descent colour from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company. This measure resulted in the growth of English education among all the classes of the Indian society. The Charter empowered the Governor General of Bengal to exercise his control over the rest of provinces to oversee the educational policy of these provinces as well. Moreover, the educational grant was increased from Rupees 10,000 to 1,00,000 which strengthened the hope of future educational expansion.

In 1834 Lord Macaulay supported the idea of education for the masses and made a vigorous plea for spreading western learning through the medium of English. English was

also made the court language, which resulted in the rapid growth of English education among certain sections of society in India. But masses remained uneducated as nothing concrete was done for their education. However, in 1835, the government conducted survey of indigenous educational systems of Bengal and Bihar for investigating the actual status of education. The Survey Report recommended for imparting literacy instructions to the persons above 14 years of age. Later on, some adult schools were opened in the Provinces of Bengal and Bihar to impart literacy education to the adult citizens.

Thereafter, in 1854 Sir Charles Woods' Report on Education, popularly known as 'Woods Despatch' imposed on the government the task of creating a properly articulated scheme of education from primary school onwards. The main objectives of the Despatch were:

(i) To confer upon the natives of India those vast and material blessings which flow

21. N.A. Ansari, Adult Education in India, New Delhi, S. Chand & Company, 1984, p. 5.
from the general diffusion of the Western Knowledge; (ii) not only to produce high degree of intellectual fitness but also to raise moral character of those who partake of the above advantages: (iii) to supply East India Company with reliable and capable public servants; and (iv) to secure for England a large and more necessary articles for her manufacturers.\textsuperscript{22}

The Despatch mentioned nothing about the removal of mass illiteracy. However, it stressed the importance of women education and laid down the foundation of two native female schools in Ahmedabad by which women education began to be generally known.\textsuperscript{23} In 1857, the first three universities were established at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, but no steps were taken for the education of the masses.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} S.K. Saini, Development of Education in India, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 36.
\item \textsuperscript{23} A.K. Sen., \textit{Crisis in Indian Education}, Hyderabad, Institute of Public Enterprises 1971, p. 42.
\item \textsuperscript{24} S. Nurullah \& J.P. Naik, \textit{History of Education in India During the British Period} \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.
\end{itemize}
In view of the slow progress of primary education from 1834 to 1882, the Government of India established a Commission known as Hunter Commission (1882) to enquire into the working of the existing educational policy. The main aim of the Commission was to enquire particularly into the implementation of 'Despatch' of 1854 and to suggest suitable measures to implement the policy. The Commission mainly covered elementary education of the masses, encouragement of indigenous schools, legislation and administration. It also stressed the need for improving female education at local, municipal and provincial levels. However, it suggested nothing for the development of adult education; yet the recommendation of the Commission led to a great educational awakening in India and its main findings dominated Indian education policy till 1902.25

In 1904 Lord Curzon published his

educational policy in the form of a Government Resolution. The defects in the Indian education system were minutely analysed and put forth clearly in the Resolution. It was pointed out in his recommendations that "four out of five villages are without a school. Three boys out of four grow up without education and only one girl in forty attends any kind of school". The Resolution emphasised the need for the expansion of primary education for the masses and for allocating more funds for the education of women. However, the recommendations of the resolution remained confined to college, secondary and primary education.

Thereafter, in 1906 the National Council of Education* was organised with the objective of imparting literacy as well as technical knowledge to all communities under central control. The fundamental ideal of the council was to quicken the spread of education. However, the activities of the council remained confined only to the State of Bengal. Later, in 1911

* The Council was registered in June 1906, under the Government of India Act XXI of 1906.
Gokhale's Bill on Primary Education with the objective of providing for the gradual introduction of elementary education system in the country. But the Bill was turned down after fierce debate for ten days in the council.\textsuperscript{26}

In 1913 the Resolution of the Government of India on Educational Policy recommended the expansion of lower primary schools along with instruction in 3 R's. The introduction of local Boards, subsidy to private schools and emphasis on women education was also recommended. Thereafter, the Royal Commission (1928) recommended the spread of literacy among women for rural development. It also suggested the mobilisation of all resources, public and private, effective liaison between various educational institutions to attack the problem of mass illiteracy. But advancement of adult education was considered as non-governmental activity rather than the activity to be pursued by

\textsuperscript{26} V.K. Kohli, \textit{Current Problems of Indian Education}, Jalandhar City, Krishna Brothers, 1972, p.4
the government.  

In 1928 Hartog Committee was appointed as an Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission to survey the problem of mass education. The report covered all aspects of education in British India and highlighted the importance and role of literacy for political education of Indians. It observed that the average Indian villager willingly sends his child to school for a year or two, but, as soon as the child is capable of working in the field or at home, the economic pressure and long tradition are strong inducements to take the child away. There are also formidable obstacles arising from caste and communal feelings. The establishment of a really satisfactory system of mass education constitutes one of the most tremendous problems. Illiteracy prevails among adults to a most alarming degree and that, unless a child has learned to read and write in early


years, it is unlikely that it will become literate later in life. The Committee recommended the transfer of literacy instructions to local bodies. However, the Government of India Act 1935, divided all educational activities into two categories i.e., Federal (Central) and Provincial. Each Province was authorised to organise its own education services. Some of the schemes for eradication of illiteracy and starting compulsory elementary education were introduced. But, all these schemes came to a stand still as the war broke out and the Congress ministries resigned.29

In 1937 Wardha Committee popularly known as Zakir Hussain Committee was the first to study and emphasise the importance of elementary education for the eradication of mass illiteracy. It recommended free and compulsory primary education to all children for seven years on

The scheme was accepted by the government. However, no adequate arrangements were made for its implementation. Later on Mr. Abbot, former Chief Inspector of Technical Education and S.H. Wood, Director, Intelligence Board of Education, England visited the country for advising the government on the major issues of educational problems. The important recommendations made by them included the provision of education for women and girls and opening part-time schools for already employed young men. However, by and large their recommendations remained on paper only.  

In 1939, the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed a Committee* to define the sphere of adult education and to explore the possibility of finding new ways of tackling the problem of mass illiteracy. It was to consider


31. J.P. Naik, Policy and Performance in Indian Education, op. cit., p. 36.

* Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Government of Bihar was Chairman of this Committee.
the arrangement for adult education particularly for women, organisation and techniques of administrative set-up and opening of a Bureau of Adult Education in each province. The Committee emphasised the introduction of free and compulsory primary education as complementary to adult education and regarded the literacy campaign as one aspect of adult education movement. The primary aim of the campaign was not merely to make adults literate but also to keep them literate during their later life. The Committee was of the opinion that efforts should be made in the beginning to persuade the illiterate to undergo literacy instructions voluntarily. If a voluntary system failed to achieve its objectives ways and means of bringing pressure to bear on them were to be explored.  

Another recommendation made by the Committee was to create the Central Bureau of Adult Education at Union and Provincial

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levels for providing policy guidelines and implementing strategies. For teaching/learning materials, the Committee suggested its preparation according to the needs and interests of the learners in their own provincial languages. The Committee visualised the eradication of illiteracy through mass campaign with the involvement of officials and non-officials.\textsuperscript{33}

Keeping these recommendations in view, the Central Advisory Board of Education prepared a report in 1944 on the Post-war Educational Development in India\textsuperscript{*}. The Report covered all aspects of education, including adult education. It estimated that even with the introduction of universal system of basic education there would be 9 crore illiterates in the age-group of 10-40 to be dealt with. It suggested a 5-year period of preparation to meet this challenge.

\textsuperscript{33} Government of India, Report of Adult Education Committee on Adult Education in British India, New Delhi, Central Advisory Board of Education, 1939.

\textsuperscript{*} The Report is popularly known as Sargent Report after the name of John Sargent, Educational Advisor to the Government of India.
before launching the campaign of adult literacy. Although it laid emphasis mainly on the liquidation of adult illiteracy in the beginning, yet adult education in the full sense was thought to be essential even for those who were already literate. It suggested the implementation of the Adult Education Programme through respective state governments.\footnote{Government of India, Report of the Post-war Educational Development in India on State and Literacy Campaign, Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, 1944, pp. 68-74.}

Thus, during the Pre-Independence period several policy frameworks came into being but the implementation of the Programme did not make much headway. The whole exercise was half-hearted and non-productive and whatever attempts were made lacked earnestness. However, these attempts paved the way for the development of the modern education policy, particularly in the field of adult education and its administration.
POST - INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:

After Independence (1947) the education policy unfolded new vistas of hopes and possibilities for educational planning and implementation. Education began to be viewed as something which could provide leadership in administration, policies, professions, commerce and industries. The government felt that the education system could serve as the basis for a self-reliant development of the country. Therefore, it was considered necessary to examine the entire field of education which may be capable of making effective contribution to all aspects of national life. Education was viewed as a crucial input into various sectors of economy and an instrument of social transformation.\(^35\) Illiteracy and lack of opportunities for education were accepted as fundamental reasons for mass backwardness. The National Government recognised the bi-directio-

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nal linkage between education and development. It was in this context that soon after Independence the task of restructuring the educational system was initiated.\textsuperscript{36}

The existing system of education was not only considered quantitatively small but also qualitatively inadequate and dysfunctional.\textsuperscript{37} Bringing about reforms in this sector was therefore, considered to be the first priority. Accordingly, the government appointed different Review Committees, Expert Groups, Study Teams, and Commissions to suggest and recommend improvements in different areas of education. As a result, different strategies appeared to fulfil the educational needs and aspirations of the masses.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{36} R.N. Thakur, "Implementation of Education Policy: A Critique on Sex-Based Disparity, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 754.

\textsuperscript{37} M.S. Gore, \textit{Education and Modernisation in India} Jaipur, Rawat, 1982, p. 20.

The educational policy and planning during the various Five Year Plans were geared to fulfil the various national objectives. Many steps were taken from time to time to improve the quality of education and to reduce the number of illiterates. The importance of education was also given due consideration in the constitution of India. However, the main emphasis of the government policy was concentrated on the universalisation of elementary education for all children in the age-group of 6-14 years by strengthening formal system of education. The policy-makers had not given thought to the removal of prevailing mass illiteracy among the adult citizens which numbered 267 million at the time of Independence. 39

The first attempt for the removal of mass illiteracy was made by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1948. It appointed an Adult Education Committee to suggest a scheme for

the removal of illiteracy under the Social Education Programme. The Committee opined that the Programme of Adult Education which was till then confined to literacy instruction alone, would open new avenues of knowledge and opportunity to the citizens. The immediate aim of the Programme was considered to improve the standard of living of the people and turn them into healthy and better citizens. It visualised a 50 per cent literacy target in 5 years. However, it felt that the prevailing socio-economic set-up in the country demanded direct approach to achieve this goal. The Committee further suggested the constitution of a Board of Experts to examine the whole issue and recommended special legislation on this count. It also advised the government to send a team of experts to foreign countries where successful experiments were being carried out for the removal of mass illiteracy.  

In the same year (1948) the University Education Commission popularly known as Radha-krishanan Commission presented a Report on Educational Reforms. It strongly advocated the need for general advancement of rural India through a network of rural colleges and universities. However, the Commission concentrated on the various aspects of higher education only.\textsuperscript{41} Later, in 1950 the subject of education was given due consideration in the Constitution of India. It was made a state subject.*

The Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 45) made a provision for free and compulsory education to all children upto 14 years of age group within 10 years from


* Constitutional amendment of 1976 includes Education in the concurrent list. This amendment brings about substantive, financial and administrative implications. It requires a sharing of responsibility between the Union Government and the states in respect of vital areas of national life. However, the role and responsibility of states in regard to education remained unchanged in essence.
the commencement of the Constitution. Article 46 of the Constitution also guarantees care of women, children and weaker sections of the people particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and protection against social injustice and other forms of exploitation. Articles 29 and 30 guarantee the right of the minorities to conserve their language, script and culture and to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice whether based on religion or language, thus, giving protection to the interests of the minorities. Article 29 reads that no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds of religion, race, caste, language or any of them. Article 350 seeks to provide facilities for instructions in mother tongue at the primary stage to the children belonging to linguistic minority groups.

Thus, the Constitution embodies the principles of a National System of Education which implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. The Constitution presupposes that its provisions would benefit all sections of society and the people would get education of their choice at the place suited to them.

With a view to operationalize the spirit of the Constitution, the Planning Commission started its task with full earnestness in the field of education. Discussions were held with experts, committees, study groups, task forces, and representatives of state governments to overcome the problem of mass illiteracy. The First Plan Document (1951-56) pointed out that:

"In a country, where 80 per cent of the population is illiterate, democracy will not take roots until a progressive programme of primary education trains up a generation
fit to undertake its responsibilities." Even the scheme of primary education is considerably handicapped without a corresponding Programme of Adult Education. However, Adult Education was merged with the Community Development Programme in the First Plan. It was assumed that by linking it with other development programmes, the people would come forward to get rid of illiteracy. A sum of Rupees 153 crore was allocated to education but only 5 crore was earmarked for Adult Education. This amount was further reduced as Adult Education Programme was merged with Community Development Programme.

In 1952, production of literature was given due consideration and a special committee on Adult Education Literature was constituted. The Committee stressed the need for preparing an Encyclopedia on Adult Education Literature and the publication of teaching/learning material.

44. V.S. Mathur, Revitalising Indian Education, op. cit., p. 17.
by the state governments according to the needs and interests of the learners in their own regional languages. The National Fundamental Centre for imparting training to adult education functionaries was opened. Accordingly, a sum of Rupees 4 crore was allotted to the production of adult education literature in the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61).

In 1956, the government appointed an Assessment Committee which recommended holding a conference of Education Ministers and Education Secretaries of all States for suggesting measures to check mass illiteracy. In pursuance of this recommendation a Standing Committee on Adult Education was appointed. It suggested that principles of education through productive activities chosen by student learners


must be related to the needs of the society and the learners. The Committee put forward 14 functional areas for learners to specialize.

In 1958 the Planning Commission felt that equality and social justice were not possible without the participation of women which constitute more than half of the population among the illiterates. Therefore, a Committee on Women Education* was constituted. It suggested various measures to check wastage and stagnation among school going girls and launching of intensive literacy campaign for illiterate women. 47 Similarly, a Committee on Religious and Moral Education in 1960 and another Committee on Emotional Integration in 1961 examined the educational desirability of adult men and women and suggested various measures to overcome them. 48

* Smt. Durgabai Desh Mukh, was Chairperson.


From the foregoing it is quite evident that many attempts were made by the government from time to time to eradicate illiteracy but these efforts failed to bring about the desired results. The increase in the number of illiterates was highlighted by the Census of 1961. It revealed that literacy rate had gone up from 16 per cent in 1951 to 24 per cent in 10 years and the number of illiterates had increased from 300 million to 334 million during the corresponding period. Such a dismal picture can be attributed to the lopsided approach adopted during the first two five years plans.

With a view to examine the various problem areas in the field of education a Committee on Plan Project studied various aspects of educational activities including adult education. It recommended the need for creating an institutional arrangement at the Union level for advising the government. The creation of Central Board of Adult Education consisting of the education

ministers of all the States was recommended. The Project Committee also suggested the involvement of Panchayats, local bodies, voluntary agencies, school teachers and industrial establishments in the process of Adult Education.\(^{50}\)

Similar efforts were made by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1963. It constituted a Standing Committee to assess the magnitude of the problem and the relevance of the Adult Education Programme. The Committee considered Adult Education as an essential ingredient for bringing about desirable changes in the society.\(^{51}\) Similarly, a Committee on Plan Project (1964) studied the position of literacy among Industrial Workers in public and private sectors. It formulated concrete plans for eradicating illiteracy, especially


in the age group of 16-45 years. Moreover, in view of the important role of education in national development, the Government of India considered it necessary to examine the entire field of education in order to formulate a balanced, integrated and adequate system of national education. To achieve this objective the government appointed an Education Commission popularly known as Kothari Commission in 1964 to suggest various measures.

The Commission gave a two fold strategy i.e. 'selective approach' and 'mass approach' for liquidating illiteracy. The selective approach focussed on specific groups of adults who could be easily identified and motivated for intensive literacy work. All types of employers in public and private sectors were to make their employees functionally literate within

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52. Government of India, Report of the Committee on Literacy Among Industrial Worker in India, New Delhi, 1964, p. 56.

3 years. It suggested to make it legally binding on the employers to inculcate literacy among their employees. However, the mass approach aimed at launching a literacy campaign throughout the country by active involvement of Central, State and Local governments, all educational institutions, public and private organisations, voluntary agencies and all educated men and women. In this context the Commission stated that liquidation of illiteracy had become a matter of immediate concern for all when a majority of our people were unable to read and write. It visualised the possibility of eradicating illiteracy through a mass campaign of the Adult Education Programme by 1985-86. 54

Apart from these strategies the Commission suggested the following measures:

(i) Expansion of universal schooling of five years duration to the age group 6-11:

(ii) Provision for part-time education to children of the age group 11-14 who either miss schooling or drop prematurely out of the school;

(iii) Part-time general and vocational education to the younger adults of the age group of 15-30;

(iv) Universities to shoulder the responsibility of adult education by establishing Boards of Adult Education;

(v) Establishment of National Board of Adult Education in which different ministries and agencies were to be represented. The function of the Board was to advise the government on all matters relating to Adult Education;

(vi) Voluntary agencies were to receive all assistance, both financial and technical.

In the light of these recommendations the government gave serious thought to the ailing system of education and considered it proper to issue special guidelines to tackle the problem. It constituted a Committee* of parliamentarians to deliberate and prepare a draft outline for a National Policy of Education.


* Dr. Triguna Sen the Minister of Education was Chairman and it had 32 members of Parliament as its member.
A resolution on this count was passed in July 1968. It was for the first time that a separate policy on education was prepared by the Government of India. 56

The policy considered the liquidation of mass illiteracy as essential for quickening the pace of national development in general. It suggested the need for radical reconstruction of education system to improve its quality at all stages. The policy guidelines also laid down the provision for the employers to make all their employees literate within 3 years of their employment. Similarly, teachers, students and educational institutions were to be involved in the literacy campaign as a part of the social or national service programmes. The achievement of literacy was to be sustained by providing attractive teaching/learning material to the neo-literates. 57


To operationalize the National Policy of Education a National Board of Adult Education (1969) was created at the Central level. The Board had all the Education Ministers of the States as its members and the Union Education Minister as its chairman. It was to assist the government in all matters of policy and the implementation of the Programme. The Directorate of Adult Education was to serve as its secretariat to provide technical know-how about the Programme.

In the meantime the Census of 1971 once again showed an increase in the number of illiterate persons. It revealed that literacy rate had gone up from 24.02 per cent in 1961 to 29.45 per cent in 1971 and the number of illiterates had increased from 334 million to 386 million during this period.\(^5^8\)

\(^5^8\) K.S. Bhatt, S. Ravishankaran, *Administration of Education* (ed), New Delhi, Seema Publication, 1985, pp. 75-76.
the government considered that the existing formal system of education was not enough to produce the desired results and needed a fresh look into the entire gamut of the education system. After extensive consultation and thought a policy statement on Adult Education and the Outline of the National Adult Education Programme were finalised (1978). The Programme was included in the Minimum Needs Programme in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1979-84) which envisaged 100 per cent coverage of adult illiterates in the age group of 15-35 by 1990 which numbered 115 million at that time. It was for the first time that the government decided to launch a well-planned programme for such a large segment of population. It fixed the year-wise coverage of targets and emphasised the need for special attention to persons belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes women and other weaker sections of society. The main assumptions of the policy were:

(i) that illiteracy is a serious impediment to an individual's growth and country's socio-economic progress;

(ii) that education is not co-terminous
with schooling but mostly takes place in work and life situations;

(iii) that learning, working and living are inseparable and each acquires a meaning only when correlated with others;

(iv) that means by which people are involved in the process of development are at least as important as ends; and

(v) that the illiterates and the poor can rise to their own liberation through literacy, dialogue and action.

Initially the Programme was to initiate the following measures:

(i) Creation of an environment favourable to the launching of the Programme and preparation of the case studies of some past experiences, particularly those where failure and success have a bearing on planning and implementation;

(ii) Creation of necessary infrastructure for administration and coordination;

(iii) Identification of various agencies: official and non-official;

(iv) Development of training methodologies for different functionaries; and

(v) Preparation of financial estimates for teaching/learning material, as well as creation of a system for monitoring and evaluation. 59

PHASING OF THE PROGRAMME:

The Programme was to be implemented in the form of a compact Project. It was to consist of 200-300 centres in the most illiterate pockets of the district. The State government was assigned the responsibility to implement the Programme, though the funds were provided by the Central Government. The whole Programme was divided into 3 stages which run for 3 years. The first stage was the basic literacy and general education consisting of 300-350 hours spread over a year and leads to literacy level of grade III. Second and third stages, meant for post-literacy follow up, were to run for 150 hours in the second year and 100 hours in the third year. The literacy level expected after the third year is considered more or less equal to the level of grade V.  

The Policy makers had visualised a two year Post-Literacy Programme in continuation

with the first year basic Literacy Programme. In the first phase of the Post-Literacy stage i.e. the second year of the Adult Education Programme, graded textual material was to be provided to the learners for a guided study with the help of an instructor. In the second phase, the learners were to be provided with a variety of supplementary reading material, the thematic and linguistic contents. These were to provide a smooth transition to general reading material available in the open market and libraries. To encourage women's participation, textual and supplementary material for women, such as on mother and child care, home management nutrition etc. was to be made available.61

RESOURCE SUPPORT:

The resource support was to be provided by the Directorate of Adult Education, the Government of India, (National Resource Centre) and fifteen State Resource Centres set up in

different states. Where there was no Resource Centre the State Directorate of Adult Education was to make alternate arrangements. All the teaching/learning material needed for adult education centres was to be provided by the State Resource Centre. The involvement of publishers and writers in the preparation of material was also sought by the policy makers.62

Each State Government was advised to create its own Directorate of Adult Education in the Department of Education, for planning, administration and supervision of adult education activities. At the district level each district was to have its own District Adult Education Officer, assisted by the Project Officer, supervisors and other supporting staff.63


63. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, Some Adult Literacy Imperatives, in Literacy and Learning, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
In order to review the Programme a Committee was appointed (1980) which pointed out many shortcomings in the Programme and suggested remedial measures. It also recommended to cut the size of the Project to 100 to 200 Centres. In the same year the Planning Commission was asked to workout the expenditure to be incurred on the project administration, and per learner for a period of one year. A sum of Rupees 1,760 crore was laid down on education in the Sixth Five Year Plan and the share of Adult Education was 200 crore this time. This outlay was the highest till date. The Adult Education Programme was included in the Minimum Needs Programme and the New 20-Point Programme of the Government of India.

In 1983, the University Grants Commission reviewed the problem of illiteracy and sugges-

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ted that every university and college to adopt a minimum number of villages around its jurisdiction to undertake a Programme for the removal of illiteracy. A separate department dealing with Adult Education was also created in most of the universities.

The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) emphasised 100 per cent coverage of elementary education upto 14 years including functional literacy for women in all the developmental activities and programmes. It also made a provision for creating Adult Education Cells in each district to collaborate with other development programmes.\(^{66}\)

In 1985, the Government appointed a committee to examine the motivational aspects of adult learners. It pointed out that the motivational aspect of learners, administrators and functionaries was not only important but crucial for the success of Adult Education.

\(^{66}\) Sita Ram Sharma, Development of Adult Education in India, New Delhi, Akashdeep Publishing House, 1990, p. 188.
Programme. The Committee was of the opinion that the Education Ministry alone would not be able to make this Programme a success until the total government machinery and the entire gamut of education system was not geared to understanding its spirit and ideals.

NEW NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION 1986:

For the first time in the history of Independent India, the National Government has shown deep concern in matters of education. It realised that nothing concrete had been achieved from the earlier policy decisions and the illiteracy had multiplied manifold which had thrown new challenges. Therefore, unlike the earlier policy practices, the government presented a new policy perspective on education in the parliament. The document, "The Challenge of Education" and the inaugural speech of Prime Minister under the title "Revamping

the Education System" formed the basis of discussion at the conference of State Education Ministers (1985). The document was translated into all the regional languages and given wide publicity. Nationwide debate and seminars were organised, suggestions and comments were invited. On the basis of this feedback, the Education Ministry brought out a revised document, 'National Policy on Education,' 1986. This paper was discussed at the meetings of the State Ministers of Education, the National Development Council and the Central Advisory Board of Education. It was revised in the light of these discussions and the 'Draft, National Policy on Education, 1986' was finally adopted by both the houses of Parliament and thus, the National Policy on Education emerged as national commitment.68

Later on, for effective implementation of the policy a 'Programme of Action' was formulated by 23 task forces consisting of eminent

educationists, experts, senior bureaucrats and representatives of the state governments. The Programme of Action covers a vast gamut of crucial educational parameters. However, this does not provide any clue as to how the requisite funding of this mammoth order is going to be achieved.69

The Policy made provision for a phased, time-bound programme of elementary education for children up to primary stage by 1990. The elementary stage and Adult Education for men and women in the age group 15-35 are to be achieved by 1995. The Central and State Governments, political parties and their mass organisations, the mass media and educational institutions are to cooperate in this endeavour. It also spelt out the large-scale involvement of teachers, students, youth, voluntary agencies and employers in the mass literacy Programme.70


Apart from facilitating ability to read and write among adults the policy linked Adult Education with national goals such as poverty alleviation, national integration, environmental conservation and observance of small family norms.

The vast Programme of Adult and Continuing Education was to be implemented in the following manner:

(a) establishment of Centres in rural areas for continuing education;
(b) workers' education through the employers, trade unions and concerned agencies of the government;
(c) making provision for books, libraries and reading rooms;
(d) use of radio, T.V. and films as mass and group learning media;
(e) creation of learners' groups and organisations;
(f) programme of distance learning; and
(g) organising need and interest-based vocational training programmes.

The Programme of Action emphasised the need for re-organisation of the existing
programme by introduction of flexibility in the Project structure, decentralisation of supervisory staff, increase in the number of women instructors and application of science and technology. 71

NATIONAL LITERACY MISSION:

In pursuance of the Policy, a National Literacy Mission was launched in 1988. In quantitative terms, the Mission seeks to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons in 15-35 age group; 30 million by 1990 and an additional 50 million by 1995. The emphasis of the Mission is not on mere numbers but on the attainment of certain pre-determined norms and parameters of literacy, numeracy, functionality and awareness. 72


Under this Programme 2,84,000 Centres were sanctioned with an estimated involvement of 84 lakh adult learners (about 35 lakh men and 49 lakh women). Six lakh literacy Kits were delivered to students and volunteers. Over 300 Voluntary Agencies and 30,000 Jan Shikshan Nilayam's (People's Education Schools') were to be engaged in this process. A mass campaign was launched by the then Prime Minister in 1988. Similar campaigns were launched in 24 states by various Chief Ministers. In the year 1989 1,33,034 Adult Education Centres with the enrolment of 39.72 lakh illiterates were opened. 73

Thus, the history of the educational policy has gone through many phases since Independence. Many steps were taken by the government to overcome the problem of illiteracy from time to time. On the other hand every Census Report showed that the number of illiterates

had multiplied on an alarming scale and the provision in the Constitution did not automatically motivate the masses towards literacy. Similar was the fate of other educational policies and programmes. The general, all-embracing education policy of the earlier times made no dent in the swelling number of adult illiterates. As a consequence, a separate educational policy for adult illiterates was framed by the Government of India in 1979, which led to a separate movement in the field of adult education.