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CHAPTER II
PRIMARY EDUCATION POLICY IN INDIA AND TAMIL NADU
Provision for Education in the Constitution of India

National Policy on Education 1986 has rightly remarked that "the Constitution embodies the principles on which the National System of Education is conceived of." Every Constitution has a philosophy of its own which the embodies the ideals, values, hopes and aspirations of its people. So Education should find an important place in this Constitution. India decided to be an effective democracy. This fact underlined the vital role of education in the national development.¹

Independent India adopted its new Constitution on 26th January 1950. This Constitution was framed by the elected representatives in the Constituent Assembly. The Preamble of the Constitution has been described as an identity card of the Constitution. It provides the conception of the economic and social order for which youth of the country should be educated. It contains laudable objectives and gives an inspiring picture of India's future.

Our Constitution has made some very vital provisions. Education received added importance and significance. The education of the masses became the responsibility of themselves. "For any one interested in education and in educating the future citizens, the importance of having a firm grasp over all the constitutional provisions which are made for solving educational and social problems in the country is extremely vital."

The Preamble of the Constitution states, "We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign, Democratic and Social Republic and to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all: Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and unity of our nation in our Constituent Assembly, this 26th day of November, 1949, do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution."²

Our Constitution has all the ingredients required for the establishment of Sovereign Democratic Republic in all the citizens; irrespective of caste, creed and colour have equal rights. The adoption of the four-fold idea of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity in our Constitution has really been incorporated for the elimination of social inequalities, economic disparities and political privileges. Our Constitution laid down that in the eyes of law everyone should have equal status. To no one the justice be denied, everyone should have the liberty of thought, expression and to practice his own faith and belief and the dignity of each individual should be assured. All these provisions have vital provisions for our education.

The Forty Second amendment, 1976 brought about drastic changes in the Indian Constitution. Before 1976, education as whole was a State subject, and the Central Government used to play only an advisory role. A lot of controversy continued for sometime regarding the constitutional provision of education. The persons connected with educational administration felt that the education should be the joint responsibility
of the Central and State governments. In 1976, a Constituent Amendment put this controversy to rest. The amendment, which is known as the Forty-Second Amendment of the Indian Constitution, received the assent of the President on December 18th 1976. Accordingly education was put on the Concurrent List. The implications of making education the concurrent subject is that both the Center and States can legislate on any aspect of education from the primary to the University level.

By having education in the concurrent list, the Center can implement directly any policy decision in the States. A Committee headed by Shri. S. Swaran Singh suggested the Amendment. Education on the Concurrent List was put on the recommendations of the Swaran Singh Committee in 1976. The Committee said, “Agriculture and education are subjects of primary importance to the country’s rapid progress towards achieving desired socio-economic changes. The need evolve all-India policies in relation to these two subjects cannot be over-emphasised.

This Amendment makes the Central and the State governments equal partners in framing educational policies. Union becomes supreme over the States in enacting laws regarding education. The executive power is given to the Union to give directions to the States. The States have power limited to the extent that these do not impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive powers of the Union. The Center can implement directly any policy decision in any State. National Institutions like, University Grants Commission (UGC), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and national bodies like Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) have higher power and strength to shape the education of the country in all the States.

Our Constitution is a Federal one. Meaning division of powers between the Center and the States and some powers are described as Concurrent. Accordingly there are three lists:

a. List I – Union List
b. List II – State List
c. List III – Concurrent List

a. Union List: List I one includes items which are of great interest to the Nation. The Center has exclusive powers to make laws on the items in List I.

b. State List: List II include items of local interest. The States have power to make laws to cover items in List II.

c. Concurrent List: List III includes items that concern both the center and the States. For those included in List III Center and State both can legislate.

With this Amendment, education comes under the Concurrent List and the Central and the States Governments become meaningful partners in it.
CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION ON EDUCATION

There were some changes regarding the 42nd amendment to the Constitution. During 1976 our Constitution was amended in many of its fundamental provisions. Under the Constitution of India, the Central Government has been specifically vested with several educational responsibilities. The following are the Constitutional provisions on education:

Free and Compulsory Education:
The Constitution makes the following provisions under Article 45 of the Directive Principles of the State Policy that, “the State shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age fourteen years.”

The expression ‘State’ which occurs in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include, “the government and Parliament of India and the States and all Local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.”

It is clearly defined in Article 45 of the Constitution that the provision of Universal Free and Compulsory education becomes the joint responsibility of the Center and the States.

In the Constitution it was laid down that within ten years i.e., by 1960 Universal Compulsory Education must be provided for all children up to the age of 14 years. But unfortunately, this directive could not be fulfilled. Vigorous efforts are needed to achieve the target of 100% primary education. The Central government needs to make adequate financial provisions for the purpose. At the present rate of progress it may however, be expected that this directive maybe fulfilled by the end of this century.

Education for Minorities
Article 30 of the Indian Constitution relates to certain cultural and educational rights to establish and administer educational institutions. It lays down:

(i) All minorities whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

(ii) The State shall not discriminate against any educational institution in granting aid to them on the ground that it is under the management of the minority, whether based on religion or language.

Language Safeguards
Article 29(1) states, “Any section of the citizen, residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own, all have the right to converse the same.” Article 350 B provides for the appointment of a special officer for its linguistic minorities under the Constitution.
Education for weaker sections
Article 15, 17, 46 safeguard the educational interests of the weaker sections of the Indian Community that is, socially & educationally backward classes of citizens of SC/ST’s. Article 15 states, “Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of Article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the SC’s and ST’s.

Under Article 46 of the Constitution the federal government is responsible for the economic and educational development of the SC’s and ST’s.

It states, “The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular, of the SC’s and ST’s, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation”. It is one of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Secular Education
India is secular country. It is a nation where spiritually is based on religion, had always been given high esteem. Under the constitution, minorities, whether based on religion or language are given full rights to establish educational institutions of their choice. Referring to the constitutional provisions that religions instructions given in institutions under any endowment or Trust should not be interfered with even if such institutions are helped by the State Article 25(1) of the constitutions guarantees all the citizens the right to have freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate any religion. Article 28(1) states, “No religious institutions shall be provided in any educational institutions if wholly maintained out of state fund”.

Article 28(2) states, “Nothing in clause (1) shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the state but has been established under any endowment of Trust which requires that religious institution shall be imparted to such institution.”

Article 28(3) states, “No person attending any educational institution run by the State or receiving aid out of State funds, shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institutions or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given consent thereto.” Article 30 states, “The State shall not in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.”

Equality of Opportunity in Educational Institutions
Article 29(1) states, “No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out the State funds, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.”
Article 30 (1) also states, “All minorities whether based on religion, class, caste, language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institution of their choice.”

The Fundamental rights of the Indian Constitution have also adopted the four-fold ideal of justice, equality and fraternity. Our Constitution laid down that in the eyes of law, everyone should have an equal status, to no the justice be denied, everyone should have the liberty of thought and expression. The fundamental right of equality clearly signifies that in the eyes of law no distinction can be made on the basis of any position, class, caste or creed. Side by side the right of equality of opportunities to all is also provided. The equality of opportunity is meaningless unless there are equal opportunities for one’s education.

The well-known Kothari Commission, 1964-66, recommended that the Central government should undertake the responsibility in education for the equalization of educational opportunities with special reference to the reduction of inter-state and the advancement of the weaker section of the community.

Instruct in Mother Tongue
There is diversity of languages in our country. After the dawn of independence, mother tongue has received special emphasis as medium of instruction and subject of study. In the Constitution of India, it has been laid down that the study of one’s own language is the fundamental right of the citizens.

Article 26(1) states, “Any sections of the citizens, residing in the territory of India, or any part thereof, having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to converse the same.”

Article 350 A directs, “It shall be the endeavor of every State and every Local Authority to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to the linguistic minority groups.”

Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53, recommended that the mother-tongue or the regional language should generally be the medium of instruction throughout the secondary school stage, subject to the provision that for linguistic minorities, special facilities should be made available.

Kothari Commission 1964-66 has also said that at college and university stage mother tongue should be the medium. The medium of instruction at the school level is already in mother tongue and it is not a new proposal.

Promotion of Hindi
The Indian Constitution makes provision for the development and promotion of Hindi as national language. Article 351 enjoins the Union, the duty to promote and spread the Hindi language. Hindi accepted, as the Official language of India laid down by the Constitution in the following words:
"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as the medium of expression of all the elements of the composite culture of India."

In practice Hindi is already largely in use as a link language for this process in order to facilitate the movement of student and teacher and to strengthen national unity.

**Higher Education and Research**
Parliament has the exclusive right to enact legislation in respect of institutions and union agencies mentioned in entries 63, 64, 65 & 66 of List I, of the Union List. The which give authority to Government of India in education is mentioned below:

**Women's Education**
One of the unique features of the Modern Indian Education is the tremendous advancement of Women's Education. Education of girls is considered to be more important than that of the boys. The Constitution makes the following provisions under different Articles:

Article 15(1) provides that the State shall not discriminate any citizen on grounds only of sex.

Article 15(3) reads: “Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children”

The well-known National Policy on Education was concerned about the status and education women in the country. It envisages that education would be used as a strategy for achieving a basic change in the status of women. It opined that the national system of education must play a positive role in this direction. The Policy states, “Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well conceived edge in favour of women.”

**Education in the Union Territories**
Article 239 of the Constitution states, “Save as otherwise provided by the Parliament by law, every Union territory should be administered by the President acting to such extent as he thinks fit, through an administration to be appointed by him with such designation as he may specify.”

**Educational and Cultural relations with Foreign Countries**
Entry 13 of the union List reads, “Participation in the international conferences, associations and other bodies and implementing decisions there at.”

The point to be noted here is the change, which is pressing the minds of the people of our country. The change is regarding the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution of India. It affected the status of education by putting it on the Concurrent List. Education is essentially a responsibility of the State Governments. But it also a National concern and
In certain major sections, decisions are made on the basis of center-state partnership. So putting education on the concurrent list is a welcome change.

Besides the above change in the Constitution, the Preamble of the Constitution enjoins two types of duties to the educators and the administrators:

(a) To impart education to the people so that they understand the principles or ideals incorporated in our Constitution.

(b) To give facilities of education to the citizens of this land and to provide equal opportunities for social upliftment to all classes of the people.

From the two changes of duties, it is revealed that educational opportunities for all must be provided. Every individual must have equal chance of upliftment, development and progress. It is also very clear that the directive principles emphasizes the role of education with no amount of effort on the part of the State and can be successful unless the citizens are educated. It is on account of this realization that free and compulsory primary education has been made part of the Directive Principle.\(^4\)

**EVOLUTION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN INDIA**

In the present day world, it is education that determines the level of prosperity and welfare of the people. Education and research are crucial to the entire developmental process of a country. This is more so in a developing country like India, where the need for an educational policy containing a built in flexibility adjustable to the changing circumstances is imperative. On the quality and number of persons coming out of schools and colleges will depend on our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction whose principle objective is to raise the standard of living of the people. Further, if the pace of national development is to be accelerated there is a need for a well-defined, bold and imaginative educational policy.

The origin of the system of education prevalent in the country today can be traced to the beginning of the 19th century. Thereafter, a number of Committees and Commissions were appointed from time to time by the Government in the pre-Independence period to suggest appropriate changes in regard to the educational policy in view of the political and social changes taking place in the country. Education, however, acquired a new significance after Independence and both the planner and the administrator have felt the need for the national system of education suited to the needs and aspiration of a free and modern society.

This chapter will deal with the evolution of the policy followed by brief of various commissions and committee reports and detailed aspect of the same dealing with primary education in India and Tamil Nadu. We will also look into the text of the National Policy of education and the outlay for elementary education till the ninth 5-year plan.
Evolution of Policy
The constitution of independent India made new demands on the education systems of the country. Broadly speaking, the first and the foremost educational demand was that of universal elementary education. Another important demand was to provide equal opportunity to all the people emanating from India’s decision to become a democratic republic.

Thus the major task before the country was to re-orient the system of education so as to adjust it to the changing needs and aspiration of the people. Consequently, the post independent period was marked by the examination of our education system by several commissions and committees.

Ever since the attainment of independence it was realized several time that there is a need for change in the pattern of education of our country. The system of education that free India had inherited was not meant to prepare for a socialist democracy, but was intended at preparing citizens whom could sub serve the cause of British Imperialism in India.

The appointment of commissions and committees tried to liquidate the inferiority borne so far and opened a new horizon towards the light of education.

Some important Committees and Commissions were:

- Tarachand Committee 1948
- University Education Commission 1948-49
- Secondary Education Commission 1952-53
- Indian Education Commission 1964-66
- International Commission on Education 1971-72
- National Policy on Education 1986
- New Education Policy 1992.5

The most notable among them were:
(1) The university education commission 1948-49 under Dr. Radhakrishnan, an eminent educationist, who later on became the President of this country, appointed to report on Indian University Education and suggested improvements and changes to suit present and future requirements of the country. It was a misfortune for the country, as most of its recommendations could not be given a practical shape. (2) The Secondary Education Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. Mudgal was set up in 1952 to examine the prevailing system of secondary education in the country and suggest measures for its reorganization and improvement (3) The Education Commission of 1964-66 i.e., the Kothari Commission was set up to advise on the national pattern of education at all stages and in all aspects. Prof. D.S. Kothari headed this Commission; Chairman of the University Grants Commission and the report of the Commission is therefore called the Kothari Commission Report.

The question of evolving a national policy on education in its various aspects had come up before the Parliament time and again and the members had evinced keen interest in the subject. Moving the resolution in the Lok Sabha on May 1st 1964, on ‘National Policy on
Education', a private member Shri Siddheshwar Prasad, charged the Government with not having paid attention to the question of education that it deserved.

He said that education policy of the Government lacked clarity and definite philosophy and uniformity. He desired a Committee comprising members of Parliament be set up to go into the question of national policy on education in all its aspects. The idea of formulating a national policy on education was also supported by other members.

Intervening in the debate, the then Minister for Education Shri M.C. Chagla, agreed that there should be a national and coordinated policy on education. He announced that the Government had decided to appoint a National Commission comprising of outstanding educationists to go into all the aspects of education in the country. As such, in his view, a Committee of members of Parliament would serve no purpose. He requested the member to withdraw the resolution, which was by leave of the House withdrawn.

Education Commission 1964-66:
The education commission under the chairmanship of Prof. D.S. Kothari, began on Oct. 2nd 1964. It consisted of sixteen members, eleven being Indians and five foreign experts. In addition the Commission had the benefit of discussion with a number of internationally known consultants in educational as well as scientific field.

The main task of the Government was to advise the Government on the national pattern of education and on the general policies for the development of education at all stages ranging from primary to the post-graduate levels and in all its aspects besides examining a host of educational problems in their social and economic contexts.

The Commission submitted its report to the Government on June 29th 1966. It was laid on the table of the House on Aug. 29th 1966. (Vide : Appendix – 1)

Outlay On Education
Till the fifth five-year plan, education was taken to be a social service rather than an input in the development process. There was a change in the emphasis beginning with the Sixth Plan wherein it was considered to be pivotal in the social and economic development of the country through development of human resources. In the Seventh Plan, the main thrust is towards promotion of quality and excellence and restructuring the education system to meet the Policy of 1986, adopted during the course of the Plan, marks the beginning of a new epoch whereby emphasis is being laid on educational technology, value orientation and national integration.

The Seventh Five Year Plan provides for restructuring and reorientation of the education system so as to encompass the development of the country’s human resource potential and to prepare the country to meet the challenges of the next century. The main thrust areas in the seventh plan are: (i) achievement of the Universal Elementary Education; (ii) eradication of illiteracy in the age group of 15-35 years; (iii) vocationalisation and skill-training programmes at different levels of education; (iv) upgradation of standards and modernization at all stages of education with effective links with the world of work and
with special emphasis on science and environment and on value orientation; (v) provision of facilities for education of high quality and excellence in every district of the country; (vi) removal of obsolescence in and modernization of technical education.

The major strategies for achieving these objectives include effective decentralized planning and organizational reforms; promotion of non-formal and open learning systems, adoption of low cost alternatives and optimum use of resources, forging of beneficial linkages with industries and development agencies and mobilisation of community resources and societal involvement.

Education is the most crucial investment in human development. Education strongly influences improvement in health, hygiene, demographic profile, productivity and practically all that is connected with the quality of life. The policies and approach to investment in the Education sector and its development in the next decade assume critical significance from this standpoint.

The Ninth Plan treats education as the most crucial investment in human development. The Prime Minister’s Special Action Plan (SAP) has identified the expansion and improvement of social infrastructure in education as a critical area.

The Prime Minister’s Special Action Plan (SAP) has stressed the need for expansion and improvement of social infrastructure in the field of education. This goal has been further elaborated in the National Agenda for Governance (NAG), which states: "We are committed to a total eradication of illiteracy. We will formulate and implement plans to gradually increase the governmental and non-governmental spending on education up to 6% of the GDP; this to provide education for all. We will implement the constitutional provision of making primary education free and compulsory up to 5th standard. Our aim is to move towards equal access to and opportunity of educational standards up to the school-leaving stage. We shall strive to improve the quality of education at all levels - from primary schools to our universities." The approach to the 9th Plan has been formulated in the light of these objectives.

**Elementary Education**

The strategy of educational development during the next decade of planning takes into account various emerging factors like (i) the national goal of providing primary education as a universal basic service, (ii) the Supreme Court judgment declaring education to be a fundamental right for children upto 14 years of age, (iii) the need to operationalise programmes through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), (iv) the legal embargo on child-labour, (v) the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, and (vi) heightened awareness of human rights violations in respect of women, children and persons from disadvantaged sections of society. It is also realized that a large number of out-of-school children, which figure neither in school enrolments nor in the calculations of identifiable child-labour, are to be provided access to schooling.
It is equally necessary that the problem of universal elementary education and literacy is tackled through a strong social movement with clearly perceived goals and involving the State and Central Governments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Local Bodies, voluntary agencies, social action groups, the media and every supportive element in society.

Post-Independence Achievements

Right from the inception of planning, the crucial role of education in economic and social development has been recognised and emphasized. Efforts to increase people's participation in education and to diversify educational programmes in order to promote knowledge and skills required for nation-building have characterised successive Five Year Plans. Despite a series of problems that the country faced soon after independence, it has been possible to create a vast educational infrastructure in terms of large enrolments and teaching force and massive capabilities for management, research and development.

- In the fifty years since independence the number of institutions has increased several fold.
- Enrolments in different types of institutions have recorded a substantial growth. The primary stage enrolment increased from 19.2 million in 1950-51 to 110.40 million in 1996-97 and that of upper primary stage from 3.1 million to 41.06 million. Taking these together, the enrolment in the two stages increased about sevenfold from 22.3 million to 151.45 million. At the high/secondary stage, the enrolment increased from 1.5 million in 1950-51 to 24.27 million in 1996-97. There has been a significant increase in the enrolment of girls over this period.
- The number of teachers working in elementary and secondary schools recorded a six-fold increase from 7.5 lakh in 1951 to 45.28 lakh in 1996, with female teachers constituting 34.3 per cent of the total number in 1996. The budgeted expenditure on education increased from Rs. 644.6 crore in 1951-52 to Rs. 36,529.29 crore in 1996-97.

As a consequence of the growth that has taken place, educational facilities are now available closer to the homes of children. The Sixth All India Education Survey (1993) has indicated that 83.4 per cent of the rural habitations had a primary education facility within the habitation or within a walking distance of 1 km. In the case of middle school education, 76.15 per cent of the habitations had this facility within the habitation or within a walking distance of 3 kms.

The increase in the availability of educational facilities within the habitation has been particularly high in the case of secondary and higher secondary stages considering that the number of habitations itself had increased by 8 per cent during this period.

Given the constitutional directive that the State should provide free, compulsory and universal education for children upto the age of 14, universalisation of elementary
education has become a major goal of educational policy and programmes. The progress in the achievement of this objective has been considerable. The total enrolment at primary stage during the period 1950-51 to 1996-97 increased by 5.75 times, while for girls the increase is nine times. At the upper primary stage, the increase during this period is more than 13 times, while for girls the increase is more than 32 times which is quite commendable. At the secondary and senior secondary stage the total increase is 18 times and that of girls 49 times.6

ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE EIGHTH PLAN PERIOD

Elementary Education

Thrusts

Elementary education, especially universalisation of free and compulsory education up to the age of 14, received a high priority in the Plan. The major effort was in the direction of reducing the disparities in access existed among various States and within States, between boys and girls and among different segments of the population and in improving the retention and achievement of children of the relevant age-group. A major effort was to provide alternative channels for education to children of deprived sections and working children who, for various reasons, could not be enrolled and stay for the entire period in full-time schools. The reduction of drop-out rates, which have continued to be high, particularly among girls and children belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other economically and socially disadvantaged communities, was an important objective of the elementary education plan. A national programme of mid-day meals was started in August, 1995 to promote access, retention and nutritional care of primary school children. Improvement in the quality of schooling and achievement levels of children enrolled in schools was attempted through the introduction of minimum levels of learning (MLL) and enhancement of infrastructural facilities. A number of innovative programmes were implemented to improve the management of schools, with emphasis on the involvement of people and voluntary organisations.

Major Achievements

Between 1992-93 and 1996-97, the number of primary schools increased from 5.73 lakh to 5.98 lakh and middle schools from 1.54 lakh to 1.77 lakh, indicating a percentage increase of 4.5 and 14.8 respectively. The growth in enrolment was significant, the increase being 4.8 per cent in the case of grades I-V and 6.1 per cent in grades VI-VIII. There was an appreciable decline in the drop-out rates from 42 per cent to 34.5 per cent in classes I-V and from 58.7 per cent to 51.6 per cent in classes VI-VIII. It is estimated that additional enrolment in classes I - VIII would have reached 73.79 lakhs between 1992-93 and 1996-97.
The following Centrally Sponsored Schemes were implemented:

i. **Operation Black Board**: Launched in 1987, the scheme was intended to improve the school infrastructure by providing essential facilities like an additional teacher in single-teacher schools, construction of classrooms and provision of books and teaching equipment. As many as 5.23 lakh schools have been provided with books and teaching equipment worth Rs. 10,000 each, 1.47 lakh single teacher schools a second teacher and the construction of 1.74 lakh classrooms undertaken. The scheme was extended to cover upper primary schools and, with Central assistance, 47,000 schools have been allowed to purchase teaching-learning materials worth Rs. 40,000 each (Rs. 50,000 for schools in tribal areas) and 33,600 posts have been created for adding a third teacher in schools with enrolment exceeding 100. In the Eighth Plan, the expenditure on Operation Blackboard is likely to be Rs. 816.26 crore against the outlay of Rs. 279 crore. About 4.5 lakh teachers have undergone special orientation for the use of teaching materials provided under the Operation Blackboard Scheme. This training programme was called the Special Orientation of Primary Teachers (SOPT) during the Eighth Plan.

ii. **National Programme of Nutritional Support**: Launched in August 1995, the programme provides three Kgs. of foodgrains per month to each primary school student. The programme is being implemented in all the States. The scheme is expected to cover 5.54 crore children by 1996-97. The total expenditure is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 1050 crore.

iii. **Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL)**: The programme was introduced with the objective of specifying competencies which all primary school students should attain at mastery level in Language, Mathematics and Environmental studies and to develop curricula and text-books in relation to these. The first phase was implemented through voluntary organisations, research institutions, SCERTs and DIETs. At present, the programme is being implemented in 12 States through 200 DIETs. The M.L. approach has been introduced in 50,000 schools in different States. It is now possible to direct effort and resources to schools where the levels of learning have fallen below the prescribed ones.

iv. **District Primary Education Programme**: The programme, partially funded by the World Bank in the form of a loan, was initiated in November, 1994. The programme aims at operationalising strategies required for achieving the goal of universal elementary education through specific planning and target setting at the district level. The intervention is based on the concept of decentralised management, community mobilisation and contextual and research-based inputs. The first phase was launched in 42 districts of Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. The programme was extended to 17 more districts of Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. It was planned to cover 120 districts by the end of the Eighth Plan.

v. **Bihar Education Project**: The programme was launched in 1991 with a sharing of costs among the UNICEF, the Government of India and the Government of Bihar. The project is being implemented in 7 districts for bringing about quantitative and qualitative improvement of primary education. A mid-term review in 1994 recommended consolidation of the programme, establishing linkages between the
project and the Education Department of Bihar Government, more emphasis on M.I.L. and teacher training etc.

vi. U.P. Basic Education Project: Assisted with a soft loan from International Development Agency the project involves construction of classrooms and Block Resource Centres and training of teachers. About 40,000 teachers have been trained.

vii. Mahila Samakhya: The project aims at empowerment of women through their mobilisation and a change in their perception about themselves and society. The programme was launched in 1991 in 10 districts of U.P., Gujarat and Karnataka. It now covers 5000 villages in 35 districts of seven States. An evaluation, conducted in 1993, indicated that the project had laid the foundation for empowerment of women at grass-roots level.

viii. Non-formal Education: In pursuance of the National Policy on Education 1986, the Central Government provides help for the establishment of non-formal education centres. Assistance is given to the extent of 60 per cent of the expenditure incurred on Centres established by State Governments and 100 per cent for Centres established by voluntary organisations. Centres run by the State Government and exclusively meant for girls are eligible for 90 per cent assistance. At present, 2.79 lakh Centres - 2.40 lakh of the State Governments and 39000 run by voluntary agencies are functioning. The enrolment during 1996-97 is estimated to be 70 lakh. The Centres provide education through condensed courses of 2 to 2-1/2 years' duration.

ix. Teacher Education: The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of reorganisation of teacher education continued in the Eighth Plan. The major programmes for which assistance was given included establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training, upgradation of selected training colleges into Colleges of Teacher Education, Institutes of Advanced Study, strengthening and establishment of university departments of education and strengthening of State Councils for Educational Research and Training. So far, 425 D.I.E.T.s have been established, 108 training colleges upgraded and 5 university departments selected for assistance. A special orientation programme covering 4.5 lakh primary teachers was organised for Operation Blackboard and introduction of M.I.L. A satellite-based interactive teacher orientation programme was implemented in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh on an experimental basis.

The National Council for Teacher Education was established as a statutory body to promote planned and coordinated development of teacher education. The Council has developed norms and criteria on the basis of which applications are processed. It has organised a number of programmes and brought out useful publications dealing with different aspects of teacher education.

During the Eighth Plan, a number of innovative projects like Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi were implemented by non-governmental organisations, Government of India and the State Governments.
Ninth Five-Year Plan

In view of its significance for human resource development and economic and social transformation, education needs to be given a high priority in the allocation of resources. Considering that the present share of education in GDP is around 3.9 per cent, raising it to any substantially higher level would require a substantial enhancement of expenditures on education. The system's capacity to absorb financial resources of a large magnitude and use them productively and efficiently would also require careful consideration. As regards the convergence of Basic Minimum Services for contributing to educational development, emphasis will be laid on providing all primary schools with clean drinking water, sanitary facilities, better nutrition for the pupils through mid-day meals, health check-up and primary health-care facilities and a network of roads for making the schools easily accessible.

Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education (ECE) in the Ninth Plan requires attention for the following issues:

i. Strengthening the educational component of ICDS.
ii. Its linkage, as pre-school education, with universalisation of primary education and consequential steps in that connection.
iii. The promotion and management of ECE under the decentralised system of Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies.
iv. The role of the private sector and NGOs in ECE.
v. Convergence of health education and other services at the local level in the interest of ECE.
vi. Social mobilisation for ECE, through mass media and other activities.

The issues that will be addressed in the Ninth Plan are as follows;

a. Combining pre-school and primary level methodologies, along with health and nutritional concerns, in teacher-training programmes, pre-service as well as in-service.
b. Encouraging the adaptation of ECE to the environment and home-conditions of the children through innovative alternatives.
c. Orienting PRIs and ULBs to provision of community-supported creches and day-care centres attached to Anganwadis/Primary schools.
d. Mobilisation of local women's groups to set up and manage ECE centres.
e. Production of inexpensive play materials for children by using local materials and talents of local artisans and school children engaged in socially useful productive work and social service activities according to their curriculum.
f. Strengthening resource groups for ECE at the NCERT and SCERTs as also research institutes, NGOs and other such organisations to conduct research, training, materials production and extension activities for ECE.
Primary/Elementary Education

The Indian Constitution attaches high priority to education. Article 45 declares "The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, for free and compulsory education of all children until they complete the age of 14 years." The Constitution also guarantees educational rights for minorities and calls for the educational development of weaker sections of society. Through the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution, the subject of education has been brought to the Concurrent List in the Constitution for fulfilment of nationally accepted goals. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments further empowered the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to render their contribution to the development of education at the grass-root level. The Judgement of the Supreme Court in Unnikrishnan J.P. Vs. Andhra Pradesh (1993) states: "The citizens of the country have a fundamental right to education. The said right flows from Article 21 of the Constitution. This right is, however, not an absolute right. Its contents and parameters have to be determined in the light of Articles 45 and 41. In other words, every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age of 14 years. Thereafter his right to education is subject to the limits of economic capacity and development of the State."

Critical Issues at Primary/Elementary Stage:-

(i) Backlog of unenrolled children:
In order to achieve Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE), it had been estimated for the year 1993-94 that approximately 142 million children in the age-group 6-11 years would have to be provided primary schooling, out of which 69 million would be girls.

(ii) Drop-outs
The problem is further accentuated by high drop-out rates. Among those who are enrolled, it is estimated that large number of children in Classes I-V drop out in between, before completing their class V. The latest available data on drop-out rates for Classes I-V for the year 1996-97 reveal that the drop-out rate for the country as a whole was 38.95 per cent. It was 39.37 per cent among boys and 38.35 per cent among girls. Further, there were wide inter-State disparities. The major problem of drop-outs as well as access to schooling is in the educationally backward States of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, U.P. and West Bengal.

(iii) Unserved Habitations with Primary/Upper Primary Schools/Sections
According to the Sixth All India Educational Survey out of 10.60 lakh rural habitation, 8.84 lakh (83.4%) were served within the national norm of one-km distance. Thus about 16.6 per cent of habitation were not served by primary schools within a distance of 1 km. The survey results also revealed that about 41,198 primary schools were being run in thatched huts, tents and open space. In case of upper primary schools, about 23.85 % habitation were not served within the official distance norm of 3 km. 5,638 upper primary schools were being run in thatched huts, tents and open space.
Primary education will be a major thrust area during the 9th Plan. There will be an additional enrolment of 2.5 crore children at the lower primary stage and 1.6 crore children at the upper primary level. 75,000 additional rooms/buildings will be constructed at the elementary stage. 2,36,000 teachers will be appointed additionally at the lower primary level and 1,75,000 teachers at the upper primary level.

(iv) Lack of other Physical Infrastructure
Apart from availability of access to primary school within a walking distance of habitations there are other problems which have to be addressed on a urgent basis. These relate to lack of physical infrastructure like toilet facilities for girls, drinking water facilities in schools, teaching-learning equipment etc.

(v) Availability of Teachers
With regard to availability of teachers, the Survey further pointed out that about 4000 schools were without teachers and 1.15 lakh primary schools were being run by single teachers. However, the position has improved since then, as additional teachers have been provided under Operation Blackboard (OB).

(vi) Low Levels of Achievement
It is not only physical infrastructure that is inadequate to achieve UPE, there is the equally important dimension of quality which needs attention. For instance, evaluation studies on children’s achievement show low levels in language and mathematics.

(vii) Equity and Regional Disparities
Then, there are regional disparities. Some States (like Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu) have done well in providing physical access to schooling facilities as well as in improving quality of education. Some others (like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa & Rajasthan) have still a long way to go. There are equity concerns like low enrolment of girls, educational requirements of special need groups, like SCs/STs, OBCs, minorities, disabled children, working children, children from disadvantaged locations like deserts, hilly, coastal and deep forest areas, children from migratory families etc.

Action Plan:-

(i) Broad Approach: The action plan needed to address the critical issues and achieve the desired objectives will be based upon ground realities. It will resort to a multi-pronged strategy which is both imaginative and innovative and also carries with it the attributes of flexibility, decentralisation, improvement of quality, cost-effectiveness, result-oriented and time-bound commitment. This can be achieved through micro-planning with a focus on ‘area approach’ and ‘target population’. It will also mean
community involvement, monitoring, supervision and academic support at all levels. The existing schemes will be examined with respect to these parameters and those found suitable will be promoted.

(ii) Phasing: Under the Constitutional obligation, Government is to provide free and compulsory education upto Class VIII. Greater emphasis will naturally have to be laid on achieving UPE at the lower primary stage, in the first phase.

(iii) Mobilisation of Community Support for School Improvement Programme

Panchayati Raj Institutions will be empowered to serve as the nucleus in programme implementation. Non-governmental organisations will be encouraged to supplement the governmental efforts, while the private sector will also be facilitated to grow particularly in higher and technical education.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments have further empowered the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to make a positive contribution for development of education at the grass- root level. Village Education Committees (VECs) will be actively involved in School Improvement Programme (SIP).

Training will be imparted to VEC members wherever such committees have been constituted. Arrangements for this will be made through District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Block and Cluster Resource Centres and through the Distance Mode.

Areas of concern of VECs in the development of SIP will be -

a. door-to-door survey of children of school-going age and help in enrolment, particularly of girls;
b. planning and execution of civil works of school buildings;
c. mobilisation of physical and financial resources;
d. provision of free accommodation to teachers, wherever possible;
e. improvement in children's attendance;
f. institutional capacity building for sustainability of schools;
g. Community ownership of the School Improvement Programme;
h. to help in implementation of the Scheme of National Nutritional Support to Primary School Children.
i. Other functions delegated by the State Governments.

(iv) Strengthening Teacher Education Programme

(a) Curriculum Development:
The draft curriculum framework developed by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) will be finalised and made the basis for curriculum change in
institutions for teacher education. This will help to improve the quality of Teacher Education Programme.

(b) Initiative for North-Eastern States
The North-Eastern States, which have a larger percentage of untrained teachers in elementary schools will launch programmes to cover this gap by adopting the following measures:

- A Diploma Programme for Primary Education developed by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) will be launched in collaboration with the State Governments.
- NCTE will establish a Regional Committee for North-Eastern States to provide the necessary fillip to the teacher training institutions.
- Induction programmes of 4 to 6 weeks' duration by DIETs will enrich the capabilities of freshly appointed teachers.

(c) Upgradation of Infrastructure:
The process of strengthening Teacher Education Programme will be given a further impetus by upgrading the physical and academic infrastructure of:

- State Councils of Educational Research & Training (SCERTs)
- Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs)
- Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs)
- District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs)
- Block Resource Centres/Cluster Resource Centres (on a pilot basis).
- National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)
- Departments of Education in Universities

(d) Reaching out to Primary School Teachers in Remote Areas
To supplement the efforts to improve school effectiveness, an institutional mechanism will be put in place to provide on-the-spot counselling and guidance to teachers located in remote areas. This will be in the form of Mobile Teams of Resource Persons (MTRPs). Logistic arrangements will be location-specific, based upon felt needs and environment.

(v) Alternative Education
In order to provide access to drop-outs, working children, girls, migratory population and other similar categories, alternative education will be provided through institutional arrangements.

Non-formal Education centres for such categories of children as are unable to avail themselves of the formal system of schooling in hilly, desert and forest areas, or due to the migratory nature of the population will be expanded. The expansion will be based upon a 'cluster approach', so as to make the scheme cost-effective.
It has been found by experience that NFE centres achieve more meaningful results when they are run by NGOs. Accordingly, the number of centres run by NGOs will be enhanced significantly. Where NGO participation is not forthcoming, State-run NFE centres will be established.

The scope of the National and State Open Schools will be expanded by bringing elementary education within their fold for the purpose of providing a lateral entry to NFE children as well as to neo-literates for certification. Private initiative will be tapped in industrial project sites to run "project schools". Incentives like allotment of land on a subsidised basis and other concessions under the Companies Act or the Income Tax Act will be provided.

(vi) Education of Working Children

According to the 1991 census, there were 11.28 million working children in the country. More than 90 per cent of them were engaged in agricultural labour, rearing of livestock, forestry and fisheries.

Ministry of Labour has a direct responsibility at the Centre for the following:

i. to lay down policies and programmes for elimination of child labour, particularly in hazardous trades,

ii. to monitor the progress of implementation of programmes, projects and schemes for elimination of child labour, and

to coordinate implementation of child labour-related projects of the various sister Ministries of the Government of India in order to ensure convergence of services for the benefit of the families which have child labour. Ministry of HRD will extend all support to the Ministry of Labour in the setting up of 'education-related projects'. These will be 'area-specific' and focused particularly in States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, where there is a large concentration of child labour.

NINTH PLAN OUT-LAY AND PHYSICAL TARGETS

The basic agenda for the Ninth Plan is to fulfill the objectives of Article 45 of the Constitution by charting out a clear course of action to make primary education free and compulsory upto Vth standard, though the ultimate object is to universalise upto VIIIth Standard. This phasing is necessary because of the resource constraint on the one side and enormous complexity of the problem on the other.

Bulk of the Plan Outlay will be spent on elementary education. Physical targets for the education sector are at Annexure-3.3.1. The IX Plan will aim at:

a. Additional enrolment at lower primary stage - 250 lakh
b. Additional enrolment at upper primary stage - 160 lakh
c. Construction of school buildings/additional - 75 thousand

d. Rooms at the elementary stage

d. Appointment of primary school teachers - 236 thousand
e. Appointment of upper-primary school teachers -175 thousand
In addition, there is a target of making 5 crore adults in the age group (15-35) literate during the plan period.

A Perspective for Education During the Next Decade

Since the task of Universalisation of Elementary Education will remain unfulfilled in States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, particularly at upper primary stage, it is obvious that there is need for a longer time horizon. The Xth Plan will continue to lay emphasis on a higher allocation for primary education so as to complete the unfinished task.

The details of the proposed physical targets at the Xth Plan will aim at:

a. Additional enrolment at lower primary stage - 300 lakh
b. Additional enrolment at upper primary stage - 250 lakh
c. Construction of school buildings/additional - 125 thousand rooms at the elementary stage.
d. Appointment of primary school teachers - 275 thousand
e. Appointment of upper-primary school teachers - 250 thousand.

The Xth plan will make another 5 crore adults population in the age-group 15-35 literate.7

Tenth Five Year Plan

The Working Committee on Elementary and Adult Education, constituted by the Planning Commission has proposed a number of new initiatives to reduce the differentials in educational attainment and literacy between gender, urban-rural and SC/ST and other caste groups. The following recommendations have been made by the working group to achieve the objectives of UEE/UPE during the tenth five year plan period 2002-2007.

Girls' education

The approach of this plan calls for a comprehensive and well-designed package for making girls education totally free and it should also take care of both the direct and indirect opportunity cost of education. The SSA provides for Rs.150/- per girl child towards free textbooks. The Working Group Committee recommended Rs.250/- per child per year to defray the direct and indirect costs of education. The Working Group also suggested that immediate attention should be given to improve the quality of education in government and aided schools as most girls depend on these schools for their education. The analysis of enrolment profile of unrecognized schools in selected districts of Haryana substantiated these findings. It was observed that more girl children are sent to government schools and the male children to private schools. Other recommendations of the Working Group include the following:
Making education more meaningful and relevant to the masses.

Encourage contextual and need-based flexible learning systems for adolescent girls.

Teacher training facilities for women should be augmented so that more women teachers can be recruited to increase their representation in the teaching workforce.

Focused measures to enroll out-of-school girls should be examined in the areas having large concentrations of out-of-school children. The field experiences from DPEP and other innovative projects should be replicated wherever possible.

Provision for special coaching and remedial classes for the girls, SC and ST students and strengthening of science and mathematics teaching in all schools should be taken up.

Reduction in gender disparities should be the key concern for educational planning particularly at the micro-planning stage.

Develop capacity for gender-sensitive data collection and its use by development planners, PTAs, school heads and the members of the VEC and the village community.

Special schemes, which promote girls' education, should be implemented in areas where participation of girls is low. At the same time, the emphasis should continue on mainstreaming of girls who study in alternative and NFE centers.

Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes

Realizing the castes comprising SC and ST groups are not homogenous in terms of their size, composition and educational attainment, the tenth plan proposes that, caste groups which are more deprived and disadvantaged should be identified through micro-planning. The Working Group proposes the following interventions:

- Improving access especially in unserved habitations.
- Improving the quality of education.
- Ensure greater representation of SC/ST community members in VEC, PTA and other forms of schools management committees.
- Using teachers available locally and upgrading their skills periodically.
- Monitoring of attendance, retention and achievement of all learners.
- Provision of extended facilities in schools in the form of hostels and other facilities that may be essential to enroll and sustain the participation of children belonging to tribal population groups.
- Convergence between the schemes of the education department and social welfare department would be necessary to get the maximum returns and to develop a consistent approach to educational development of the deprived.
- Improve the availability of locally relevant teaching-learning materials especially for the tribal children.
All SC/ST children attending school should be provided with incentives in terms of free textbooks, uniform, stationery, scholarship, and transport allowance up to Rs.250/- per child per year to defray the indirect opportunity cost of education.

The Working Group has also projected the enrolment trends to achieve the UPE/UEE by 2007. However, such estimates are not available for the SC and ST children.

**Elementary Education**

Overriding priority is given in the Seventh Five year Plan to realizing Universalisation of Elementary Education for children in the age group of 6-14 years by 1990. The emphasis has shifted from mere enrolment to retention of pupils in schools and to the attainment by the elements of learning.

A major effort in the Seventh Plan was to extend formal school education facilities, organizing meaningful non-formal education programmes and to improve the quality relevance, effectiveness and usefulness of elementary education. Special attention was to be paid to the promotion of education of girls, first generation learners and children from schedule castes and schedule tribes. The extension of elementary education is a part of the Minimum Needs Programme.

At the end of the first three years of plan, it can be seen that while the seventh plan enrollment target for classes I-V was achieved, it was difficult to realize the same at the middle school stage. Special attention was therefore called for here, in the remaining period of the Plan, so that necessary programmes and schemes are developed to help to realize 100% enrollment by 1995. But somehow the major part of the planning remained in papers and the achievement was similar to earlier plans carried forward. Also the progress was not even in all the States, it was then assumed that at this stage, with the improvement of educational institutions and the introduction of the non-detention policy, the wastage rate would be reduced to a minimum, the proportion of the over aged and the under aged children in the elementary education would be reduced gradually and that enrollment would be stabilized and maintained at a rate of 100%. All this has not happened. Thus effective steps are required to be taken to resources stagnation in schools.

In order to promote the education of girls, the focus of effort will be on the appointment of women teachers, attachment of pre-school centers, provision of free uniforms and other incentives. Unless enrollment of all eligible girls is ensured, the goal of Universal Elementary Education will remain unfulfilled.

In the field of elementary education, the New Education Policy of 1986 (NEP), tries to tackle the problems of enrolment, drop-outs and quality through a large programme, symbolically called the ‘Operation Blackboard’, coupled with a large systematic programme of Non-Formal Education.

**Non-Formal Education**

Another important programme for the universalisation of elementary education is the Non-Formal Education (NFE) with the enrollment target of the order of 25 million during
the Seventh plan. A centrally sponsored scheme of NFE was taken up in the nine educationally backward States from 1981-82. In the remaining States, according to a further revision of the scheme, NFE centers on a 50:50 financial assistance pattern, and a 90:10 pattern exclusively for girl centers, can be opened in tribal areas, desert areas and in urban slums for working children.

The New National Programme of NFE introduced from 1987-88, as part of the NPE, aims at reducing the heavy burden of the task of universalisation and retention of school dropouts on the formal system. This programme of NFE extends to all States and is mainly targeted towards school dropouts, children from habitations without schools, working children and girls who cannot attend whole day schools. In 1989-90, there were about 2.32 lakh non-formal centers in the country with the total involvement of 64.67 lakh children. The successful implementation, flexibility and adjustability and freedom to experiment with a variety of models. Investment on education has been rising over the plan periods as is evident from the actual outlay on education.

National Policy on Education, 1986

As has been observed earlier in the post independence period several commission and committee examined the educational system. The most comprehensive appraisal however was made by the Education Commission (1964-66) under the Chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari. The 1968 policy on Education formulated on the basis of this Commission’s Report attempted to link education with national development.

The 1968 policy could not be implemented in all aspects due to several constraints. No detailed plan was prepared for its implementation nor were adequate funds available for all purpose. The goal of making a new human being to create equal educational opportunities for all citizens in the country and to inculcate the feeling of unity and national integration through education had not been fully realized.

On the other hand the population was constantly increasing and there was a consequent rise in the number of illiterates. Concern was being expressed about falling standards of education. The youth had to be trained to meet the new challenges of new technologies of the coming years. Further it was also realized that the country had reached a stage in its economic and technological development when a major effort should be made to derive the maximum benefit from the assets already created and to ensure that the fruits of change reach all sections of the society. The country was therefore, faced with a situation in which there was no option but to bring about a radical change in the education system.

With this as the backdrop, the Late Prime Minister Shri. Rajiv Gandhi, announced on January 5th 1985, in his first broadcast to the Nation, that a new Education Policy would be formulated for the country. Following this a comprehensive appraisal of the existing educational scene was made. A document challenge of Education — A Policy Perspective was prepared for the purpose of, and as a basis for, initiating a nation wide debate on the new Education Policy. This Document was placed before the Parliament on August 19th, 1985. It was also discussed in the conference of State Education Ministers from Aug.
29-30, 1985. In the debate that ensued, the issues relating to all aspects of a new Education Policy were discussed all over the country in which teachers, students, parents, educationists, administrations, employees, scientists, writers, artists, voluntary agencies and mass organizations of workers, women, youth and representatives of all major political parties actively participated. The views, suggestions and detailed memoranda received from different quarters were carefully studied and incorporated in the "Draft National Policy, 1986 - A Presentation". Before being presented to parliament, the draft of the Policy was discussed in the meetings of the Central Advisory Board of Education and the National Development Council held in April 1986. Education Ministers and Chief Ministers of States attended these meetings apart from educationists and representatives of different Ministers of the Union Government. The National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) was discussed and adopted by the Lok Sabha on May 8th and by the Rajya Sabha on May 13th 1986.11

The NPE spells out specifically the direction in which efforts were required to be made to meet the challenge of education. The following aspects, among others, have been emphasized in the Education Policy.

i. Creation of a National System of Education, and
ii. Removing the imbalances and disparities in the field of education.

The NPE envisages a National System of Education based on a national circular framework containing a common core includes the history of India's freedom movement, the constitutional obligations and any other content essential to national identity. These elements cut across subject areas and are designed to promote, democracy and secularism, equality of the sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm and inculcation of the scientific temper.

The NPE emphasizes that the whole nation would be responsible for and committed to educational reconstruction, universalisation of elementary education, spread of literacy, promotion of scientific and technological research and removal of all educational imbalances.

The NPE stresses that the Union Government would assume greater responsibility for ensuring national unity, enhancing qualitative aspects of education, planning the programmes of education to conform to manpower requirements and laying greater emphasis on research and advanced studies.

The education would be made available to every child up to and certain level, irrespective of caste, creed and sex. This also, however, is not sufficient in itself for ensuring equality in the country. It is also necessary to have a system, which will provide equal opportunities of success to all. Besides, awareness of the inherent equality of all will be erated through the core curricular so as to remove prejudices and complexes transmitted through social environment and the accident of birth.

In this context, special stress has been laid on the development of education in respect of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe. The policy includes adequate provision of scholarships to SC/ST students and facilities for special coaching. Similarly social justice
demands special provisions be made for the education of those minority groups, which have lagged behind educationally. Besides, keeping in view the large number of physically and mentally handicapped persons in the country, appropriate measures to provide for their education have been envisaged.

Also, education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. Emphasis has been laid on equal educational opportunities in all the fields, removal of sex bias against women in text-books and top priority to the Universalisation of Elementary Education for girls.

As regards elementary education, the NPE stipulates that the entire nation will be committed to the eradication of illiteracy in the age group of 15-35. Besides literacy and creating social awareness, adult education programmes lay emphasis on up gradation of skills and continuing education. A vast programme of adult education, involving teachers, students, youth, voluntary agencies and employers has been implemented through various ways and channels.

The policy also lays emphasis on pre-primary education. It provides for essential facilities in primary schools, including at least two reasonably large rooms that are usable throughout the year and necessary toys, black boards, maps, charts and other learning materials. At least two teachers, one of them a woman, will work in every school, and the number increasing as early as possible to one teacher per class. A phased drive symbolically called, 'Operation Blackboard', has been undertaken so as to improve primary schools all over the country. In this endeavor the government local bodies, voluntary agencies and individuals have been fully involved. A large a systematic programme of non-formal education has been launched for school drop-outs, for children from habitations without schools and working children and girls who cannot attend whole day schools.

The NPE has also provided for the establishment of pace setting schools. These schools are meant for gifted children studying in primary schools in rural areas who do not normally get the opportunity of good education owing to poverty. Education in these schools called the Navodaya Vidyalayas, is free of charge, in reservation for SC/STs in proportion, to their population in the district. The proportion in any case, should not be less than the national average. Another special feature is that, 20% children in each of these schools should come from Navodaya Vidyalayas in other parts of the country thereby promoting national integration and opportunity to live and learn together. The three languages as envisaged in the ‘Three-Language Formula’ will play a significant role in the educational reconstruction in the country.

Special emphasis is laid on the vocationalisation of education in the NPE. It is proposed that vocational course should cover 10% of higher secondary students by 1990 and 25% by 1995. Steps will be taken to ensure that a substantial majority of the products of the vocational courses are employed or become self-employed. The courses offered should be regularly reviewed. The Government will also review its recruitment policy to encourage diversification at the secondary level.
Significant changes have been envisaged in the areas of higher education. The NPE provides that in the next few years the outlay on education will be stepped up to the extent essential for policy implementation in the Seventh Plan. It was ensured that from the Eighth Plan onwards, it will uniformly exceed 6% on the national income.\textsuperscript{13}

**Programme of Action, 1986**

In order to prepare the Programme of Action (POA), for the implementation of the National Policy of Education (NPE), the government in 1986 constituted 23 tasks. Each of them was assigned a specific subject covered by the NPE. Eminent educationists, experts and senior representatives of the Union and State Governments were also associated with them. The terms of reference of these task forces were to examine the subjects assigned to them, to elaborate the implications of the specific statements contained in the NPE, to project the necessary actions and indicate the broad targets and the phasing of the programme, and to indicate the financial implications with reference to each phase.

The Task Forces submitted their reports in July 1986. Subsequently, Conference of Education Secretaries of States and Union Territory Administrations was convened on July 20\textsuperscript{th} 1986, to discuss these reports. Suggestions received during this Conference were carefully considered and the POA was prepared with reference to the main areas covered in the NPE. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) met in New Delhi on August 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 1986, and discussed the POA document. Several valuable suggestions were received from the education ministers of the state governments and union territory administrations and educationists who had participated in the discussions. All the suggestions were taken into account in the POA which was presented to the parliament in August 1986.

The POA provides for the actions required to be taken so as to implement the directions of NPE. It also provides for a broad strategy within which detailed schemes are drawn up and put into operational form. The various programmes enumerated in the POA are spread over several years so that the implementing agencies may be able to match the mobilisation of resources with the process of implementation. The implementation of these programmes would be a cooperative effort between the union and the states.

The major thrust areas covered under the POA are as follows:

**Early Childhood Care and Education**

The POA aims at the upgradation, expansion and strengthening of the existing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), which also includes Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS); assistance to Early Childhood Education Centres (ECEC), Balwadis and Day care centers; Pre-primary schools and Material and health services.

Keeping in mind the role of ECCE as a support service in achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education as well as for human resource development, ECCE would be, in the first instance, directed to the most underprivileged groups, especially those who are still outside the mainstream of formal education.
According to the POA, every child should be assured access to the fulfillment of all the basic needs. It suggested that 70% of the target groups (children between 0-6) should be covered by all services by 2000 A.D, whereas health and nutrition services should be extended to all the needy groups as early as possible. By the end of the seventh plan, a modest network of ECCE facilities was to be established in all tribal development blocks, blocks having substantial SC population and slums in large cities. A minimum of 2.50 lakh centers was to be established by 1990. ECCE was to expand a level of 10 lakh centers by 1995 and 20 lakh by the year 2000 A.D. As the early childhood and education programmes are to expand considerably by next two decades, corresponding training facilities should be made available for all levels of functionaries. This programme should be evaluated by independent agencies once in five years. Such evaluation reports should be followed up to improve the quality of services.

Elementary Education, Non-Formal Education and Operation Blackboard

Although between 1950-51 and September 1987 the number of primary schools increased from 2,10,000 (two lakhs and ten thousand) to 5,43,677 (five lakhs and forty three thousand six hundred and seventy seven), yet a large number of habitations were without primary schools and nearly one third of the schools in rural areas have only one teacher.

The NPE gives an unqualified priority to Universalisation of Elementary Education (UBE). The Plan of Action envisages that the main feature of the implementation strategy should be area specific and population specific planning. The planning would be decentralized and the teachers as well as the local community fully involved in the process. The emphasis should be on universal enrollment and universal retention of children up to 14 years of age so as to provide them with full and compulsory education as envisaged in the Directive Principles of the State Policy of the Constitution. Also a substantial improvement in the quality of education has been emphasized. For the purpose, a programme called Operation Blackboard has been initiated so as to ensure provision of minimum essential facilities in the primary schools- material facilities as well as learning equipment. The new programme of Non-Formal Education would have certain features like learner-centered approach with the instructor as the facilitator, emphasis on learning rather than teaching, use of efficient techniques to ensure fast pace, etc. which would help in the maintenance of quality of the programme. It is envisaged that all children should be enrolled in whole time schools of good quality, and until that becomes possible they should be provided opportunities of part time non formal education. The evaluation and monitoring system would also be improved. Greatest attention would be paid to creating a scientific system of evaluation of learners, which would serve both as the basis for improvement of the academic programme and as the measure of the overall quality of the elementary education system. The emphasis in the monitoring system would shift from the collection of information on enrollment to the retention of children, regularity of attendance and levels of achievement.

The other thrust areas covered under POA were:
- Secondary Education and Navodaya Vidyalayas
- Vocationalisation of Education
- Open University and Distance Education
- Rural Universities and Institutions
- Technical and Management Education
- Delinking of Degrees from Jobs and Manpower Planning
- Research and Development
- Education for Women's Equality
- Education for SC/ST and other Backward Sector
- Minorities Education
- Education of the Handicapped
- Adult Education
- Content and Process of School Education
- Evaluation Process and Examination Reform
- The Cultural Perspective
- Teachers and their Training

**Implementation of the National Policy on Education - Programmes involving Elementary Education**

During the year 1987-88, all the major schemes under NPE, 1986 and the Plan of Action, came under implementation. Since then significant progress has been achieved in implementing the schemes of Operation Blackboard, Non-Formal Education, Navodaya Vidyalayas, Education Technology, Teaching Science in schools, Adult Education etc. In this direction, the response of the State Governments and the Union Territories Administrations has indeed been very encouraging. An amount of Rs.800 crores was provided for the Central Education Sectors in 1987-88 and was utilized on a project oriented basis. For the financial year 1988-89 also, funds were provided at the previous year level i.e., Rs.800 crore. For 1989-90, Rs.953.18 crores was earmarked. Activities initiated during 1987-88 were being continued.

The progress of implementation of the NPE, in respect of one of the programmes i.e., Elementary Education is as follows:

**OPERATION BLACKBOARD**

In May 1987, a scheme called “Operation Blackboard” was launched with Central assistance for the improvement of primary schools all over the country by providing them with

(i) two large rooms that can be used in all sorts of weather
(ii) necessary toys and games, material, blackboard, maps and charts &
(iii) an additional teacher, preferably a woman candidate, wherever there is only one teacher in a school. The drive was phased to cover 20% community development blocks/municipal areas in 1987-88, 30% in 1988-89 and 50% in 1989-90.

During 1987-88, an amount of Rs.110.61 crores was provided as assistance to 24 States and the 3 Union territories for covering 1,13,417 schools over 21% of the primary schools in the country and for providing 36,891 additional teachers for such schools.
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

The scheme of non-formal education introduced during the sixth plan as a centrally assisted scheme in the educationally backward States of Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was recognized and expanded in 1987 to cover, in addition, Arunachal Pradesh as also, urban slums hilly, desert and tribal areas and projects for working children in all the other states. Under the revised scheme, assistance is being given to State Governments in the ratio of 50:50 and 90:10 for running general non-formal education centres and girls NFE centres respectively. 100% central assistance is being given to Voluntary agencies.

In 1987-88, proposals for running 1.85 lakh NFE centres were sanctioned in 15 states and union territories. In the voluntary sector, nearly 9000 such centres, run by over 10 voluntary agencies were sanctioned. Against a target of 2 lakh centres, 1.9 lakh centres were sanctioned at an expenditure of Rs.38.07 crore. For the year 1988-89, Rs.1.28 crore was sanctioned to the voluntary agencies approved last year and an expenditure of Rs.9 crore already incurred. However, with only Rs.49.05 crore allotted to the scheme against a requirement of Rs.73 crore, physical achievements would suffer.14

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION, 1992

There was Revised Policy Formulation (RPF) which set forth the modifications to the National Policy on Education, 1986. This was placed on both Houses of the Parliament on 7th May, 1992. A CABE (Central Advisory Board of Education) Committee on Policy was constituted in July 1991 under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. It comprised of six other education ministers and eight educationists. The objective of the Committee was to review the implementation of the various parameters of the NPE 1986, taking into consideration the relevant development since the policy was formulated.

The Committee was known as the Janardhan Reddy Committee (JRC) after the name of its Chairman. The committee submitted its report in January 1992. It came to the conclusion that there is reformulation of the NPE, 1986 and it needs to be revised considerably.

The Programme of Action (POA), 1992, was evolved through which the Policy was reviewed. Twenty-two task forces were constituted on different subject areas comprising educationists and officials of the States and the Union Governments. A Steering Committee was also set up. The task forces and the steering committee accomplished their work with great care.

The draft POA was discussed at a conference of State Secretariat and Director of Education, held on 3&4 August 1992. So the CABE met on the 8th August 1992 and endorsed the document after detailed consideration. The valuable suggestions made by the State Education Ministers and Educationists were also taken into account in finalizing the document.
The Policy review had established that the policy framework of the NPE, 1986 enunciated, is robust and can guide the educational development of the country for a long time to come. Likewise many of the strategies outlined in the POA continued to be relevant and was acted upon.

The Committee recommended that the reorganization of the content and the process of education should be done on the following lines:

(i) Increasing awareness about national integration  
(ii) Observance of secular, scientific and moral values  
(iii) Inculcation of an understanding of our composite culture with its rich diversity  
(iv) Creation of an awareness of the importance of protection of the environment  
(v) Observance of small family norm  
(vi) Stress on commitment of youth to manual work and social service.

UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

India is a democratic country. Today adult franchise has been granted to every individual irrespective of caste, creed, religion and sex. Unless the people of India grow in enlightened judgment and character, the democratic ideals cannot be made a living reality. India has been a land of learning throughout the ages, not in the sense that education has been universal, but in the sense that learning has always been highly valued. It is interesting to watch the pageant of Indian education more from ancient forest schools to the modern and fully equipped schools of today. It is against the background that every problem of education in primary, secondary and higher education must be studied.

Primary education deserves the highest priority for arousing the competence of the worker and for increasing national productivity. The provision of Universal Elementary Education is crucial for spreading literacy, which is basic requirement for economic development, modernization of social structure and the effective functioning of democratic institution. It also represents an indispensable first step towards the provisions of equality of opportunity to all citizens.

The Constitution of independent India provides for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years. Article 45 of the Directive Principles of the State Policy lays down, “The State shall endeavor to provide within ten years from the commencement of the Constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they attain the age of 14 years.” Though ambitious targets of enrollment have been fixed from time to time to fulfill the directive, the desirable goal is still far from our reach. In spite of the unprecedented progress made after independence it has not been possible to realize the goal. So the Constitutional Directive has not yet been realized because of the number of problems and issues.
EDUCATION FOR ALL

It is generally believed that education is basic to all development. According to John Dewey, life is development and that developing and growing is life. If we translate this view into the sphere of education, we can that education is considered to aim at the all round development of the individual's personality.

Education and democracy are closely related. The ideal of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity are the four fold ideal of democracy. The ideal of equality means all should get the opportunity to develop their personal resources to the full. In fact education is to be employed as a highly potential weapon in order to preserve democracy and propagate his high ideals. Democracy believes in essential dignity in all persons.

Problems and Prospects:
Realizing the importance of education in a democratic setup, the Indian Constitution in Article 45 declared free and compulsory education for all in a period of ten years for children up to 14 years. Determined efforts have been made by the government since independence to achieve the goal.

The individual has the capacity to learn, so the opportunities are to be equally available. It should and need not be identical. The authors in the book “Learning to be”, has stated that, “Equal access to education is only a necessity and not a sufficient condition for justice. Equal access is not equal opportunity. This must comprise equal chance of success”. So we may emphasize that the problem of equality of educational opportunities in Indian situation is a very formidable one.

Our education system is at cross roads. The Indian Constitution laid down that there should be Universalisation of Primary Education. In the Directive Principles of the State Policy of the Constitution, it was stated that within ten years i.e. by 1960 Universal Compulsory Education must be provided for all children up to the age of 14 years. But this directive has not been fulfilled till today though we complete five decades of independence from foreign domination. At present it was expected that this directive may be fulfilled by 2000 A.D. initially and now it has been extended to 2005A.D. Fifty six years in the context of a country, like India is not a big slice of time. The short survey of making primary education universal may conclude with reference to the rapid growth of population and mass illiteracy.

The emphasis on mass illiteracy and the consequent emergence of the nation as a world power have depicted very clearly the importance of “Education for All” in the present world set-up. Today, it is marked that in the world the countries which have low literacy percentage are economically backward. Now these backward countries are realizing the importance of “Education for All” through mass literacy in their schemes of development. So in this context, the efforts of literacy of a nation like India must be examined.
The major problems faced by India are the growth in population, lack of interest by the people in adult education and the delay in achieving universalisation of primary education.

India is an over populated country and her rate of growth in population is tremendous. Hence, India’s targets for educational expansion remain hard to achieve. Any neglect of population control maybe pathetic for the country. The population growth would ruin the economy and stifle all efforts for progress.

In 56 years, literacy has advanced from 16 to 50%. So at this pace will it take more than 50 years to achieve the target of Universalisation Primary Education? According to S.S.Mathur, “All other reforms and progress in other fields will surely follow if adult literacy is made universal and not only persistent but a motivating force for creating fervor and zeal among the people for social reforms”.

At present the World Bank has prepared a report in cooperation with the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Research Institutions and some eminent educationists in India. It is reported that at the primary stage there has been more enrolment i.e. near about 6.7 crores. In this direction the position of the country is second in the world next to China. And another 3.32 crores of primary school going children have not yet been too enrolled in the primary stage. Therefore the country is unable to achieve the target of UPE as a result of which the rate of economic growth of our country is very poor. It was always imbalanced. It is however, hoped that mass literacy programmes may attract the people of our country more if they lay stress on their economic betterment with near and distant goals.16

The UPE has been adopted as a national goal and ‘Educational for All’ has been regarded as the international goal for promoting national well-being, individual excellence and efficient democratization.

It has been described that mass literacy is one of the important needs of the country. It is hoped that through proper education, the backward people of the country will attain the individual refinement, the social progress and economic betterment. But there are number of problems for achieving the goal of UPE at national level and education for all at the international level. The major problems are:

(a) finance
(b) rural-urban imbalance due to illiteracy
(c) community wise disparity as regards to women’s education
(d) economic conditions of backward communities
(e) non-availability of equipment
(f) personnel
(g) Wastage in adult literacy etc.

The National Policy of Education 1986 recommends that it would give the highest priority in solving the problems of children dropping out of school and would adopt an array of meticulously formulated strategies based on micro planning and applied at the
grass root level all over the country, to ensure children's retention at school. This effort will be fully coordinated with the network of non-formal education. It was mentioned in the NPE that, "all children who attain the age of about eleven years by 1990 will have had five years of schooling, or its equivalent through the non-formal stream. Likewise by 1995 all children will be provided free and compulsory education up to 14 years of age".

"EFA" envisage quality schools, which will enable the students to achieve minimum level of learning. In this regard the Report of the CABE, Committee on NPE 1986 remarks that, "Disparities between schools should be ended as early as possible. Up grading the quality of ordinary schools and providing amenities for achieving minimum levels of learning." Further it also states that, "UEE has therefore, to be viewed as a composite programme comprising:

(i) Access to education for all children up to 14 years of age.
(ii) Universal participation till the complete elementary education through formal or non-formal educational programmes.
(iii) Universal achievement of minimum levels of learning (MLL.)."

Therefore the newly launched District Primary Education Programme, (DPEP) has been lauded internationally for its comprehensiveness in focus and micro-level planning. The programme has been launched in the year 1994 in 42 districts in the seven states of Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Haryana, Assam, and Maharashtra as a step towards achieving UEE. During the 8th plan, it is expected to cover 110 districts. It envisages an outlay of over Rs. 1600 crores of which about Rs. 1400 crores is expected from external sources. World Bank is to provide assistance in the six states of our country, while the programme in Madhya Pradesh is being founded by assistance from European Community.

For effective realisation of UEE, the goals include, reduction of existing disparities in access to education, provision of alternative systems of education of comparable standards for the disadvantaged groups, emphasis on girls' education, improvement in schooling facilities, securing community involvement in running of schools, and building up of local level capacity to ensure decentralization of educational planning. Indian development planning has always aimed at removing inequalities in the process of development to ensure the fruits of development are an equal privilege for all.

India was committed to getting at the target of "EFA" by 2000 AD through primary education. Still it seems a long way to go. Primary schools seek to provide Universal Education relevant to the actual needs and priorities of the communities. Not withstanding the quality of life of the masses has not been adequately improved due to the improper implementation of the UEE.

It is evident from the statistics that in India in 1989-90 there were 5,48,131 primary schools of which 4,78,441 were in rural areas and 69,690 in the urban areas. The total number of primary school teachers (1992-93) was 16,81,970 of which 11,89,004 were male and 4,92,966 female. As a large number of primary schools were functioning in
rural areas, a better primary education can be articulated which is essential for making “EFA” a success.\textsuperscript{17}

The process of learning in the rural and urban areas is not the same. There are several factors other than academics that are influencing enrollments in rural schools. The infrastructure facilities available in a locality have positive impact on the awareness of the population about civic amenities and school education. Though unit cost estimates of primary education may help to analyse efficiency or rate of return on education, they do not indicate the differences among the schools as mentioned above.

Further the rates of return estimates on education which are very popular among researchers do not indicate that investment in primary education is more remunerative than the investment in higher education. (Vide: Appendix – G).

**PRIMARY EDUCATION IN TAMIL NADU**

The State of Tamil Nadu in Southern India, occupying the extreme South of the Indian peninsula has an area of 1,30,058 sq.kms. Most of Tamil Nadu is hilly, in the North lies the Nilgiri hills, in the West lies the Western Ghats and in the South lie the Annamalai.

India is composed mainly of two religious groups, Hindus 82% and Muslims 11% Hinduism practices the caste systems, whereby people are divided in to high and low castes, based on their birth in to four categories – Brahmans (the scholars and priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaisyas (traders) and Sudras (labourers and servants). “Sudra” by itself was believed to be a derogatory term and it was replaced by the term “Dravidian”. Dravidians are a distinct race and are believed to be the descendants of the Indus Valley Civilization. The reason for the use of Dravidian is that it has been theorized that when Indo-Aryans migrated to India through Northern India they destroyed and pushed the Dravidians to the South of India and incorporated Hinduism with a primary motive to suppress Dravidians, since the high castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas) were and are a small minority; even today in Southern India, they make about 3.5% of the population.

South India was ruled mainly by four kingdoms for most of its history before the British intervention. The Pallavas ruled in the North having Kanchipuram as their capital. The Cholas ruled in the southern part, having Kaveripattinam (Poonpuhar), Uraiyur, Thanjavur and Kanchipuram as their capital during different periods of their kingdom. The Pandyas ruled in the Southern Tamilnadu, having Madurai as their main capital. The Cheras ruled in present Kerala.

Tamil Nadu has a population of 62,110,839. The vast majority of the people are Dravidian, more than 85% of the population speak Tamil, which is the State’s official language. Most of the people are Hindus, with small minorities of Muslims, Jains, Parsis and Christians. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population but Tamil Nadu is also one of India’s most industrialized states. The state has single chamber legislature.
## Important Events in the History of School Education

**Department: Table 2.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Board of Public Instructions established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>First High School opened in Madras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>High Schools for Girls Opened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Directorate of Public Instruction established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Madras Educational Rules enforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Board of Secondary Education established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>SSLC Public Examination conducted for the first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Madras Elementary Educational Rules enforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Compulsory and Free Education introduced in some selected places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Directorate of Legal Studies established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Pension Scheme for Teachers introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Midday-meal programmes implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Directorate of Technical Education established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Scheme for Free supply of Uniforms for School Children organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Introduction of Free Education upto high school level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Directorate of Collegiate Education established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Text-book Society established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Directorate of Public Libraries established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Directorate of Government Examinations and SCERT established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Directorate of Non-formal and Adult Education established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Higher Secondary Education (10+2) introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Teachers in Panchayat Union Schools become Government Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Nutrition Meal Scheme introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-1990</td>
<td>Introduction of revised syllabus based on National Policy for I-XII standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>Introduction of revised syllabus for classes I-XIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Directorate of Matriculation School formed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before the advent of British in India, education was considered as a private affair. Up to 1813, the East India Company did not recognize the promotion of the education among the natives of India. The Governor of Madras Province, Sir Thomas Munro, was responsible to establish the Board of Public Instruction in 1826, which should be considered as the origin of the Education Department. Wood’s dispatch on education in 1854 laid the foundation on which the educational system has since developed. In accordance with the recommendations of the dispatch, The Madras provincial government established a Department of Public Instruction in the state. The rules and regulations were designed to assist the indigenous institutions to improve themselves and to give some assistance. The first set of grants for aided schools was issued in 1855. By 1881, a considerable portion of indigenous institutions had become aided schools and thus they moved from the category of private to public schools.

Under the Local Boards Act 1871, Local Boards were constituted and empowered to open schools and get subsidy from the government. The Madras Elementary Education Act, 1920 enabled the local bodies to levy an educational cess on land or property tax for advancement of elementary education. In 1920 elementary education was taken from District Boards and entrusted to Taluk Boards and Municipalities and the power of according recognition to aided elementary schools was transferred from the Education Department to the District Education Councils. In 1934 the Taluk Boards were abolished and elementary schools administration was entrusted again to the District Boards. In 1939, District Education Councils were also abolished and the power to recognize elementary schools was restored once again to the Education Department.

Before the independence of India, the Indian National Congress was the leading vocal for the nationalists demanding freedom from the British. When India achieved her independence in 1947, it was no surprise that the Congress party, led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, swept the elections held all around India. During in power, the Congress chose the path of socialism mainly due to two reasons. The system was already visible in India, as most of the administrative buildings and ideas incorporated had major shades of the British influence, and this is aided by the fact that the most notable Indian
leaders including Nehru studied in England. Another reason was that, it had looked at the
electoral make-up and since most people still lived in villages, a system that promoted
collective working was preferable in comparison with a competitive system as in
capitalism.

Indian politics and thereby Congress was and has been in the hands of mainly Brahmins
and elite non-Brahmins. However, due to this reason, the religious and caste minorities
make-up most of the vote bank, Congress built up an image of being a secular party for
minorities to ensure its victory.

The State intervention in the public education in Tamil Nadu has a long history,
beginning in the late nineteenth century. Most schemes introduced by the Christian
missionaries and promoted by the British administration included special schools,
scholarships, and fee waivers for depressed classes mostly the SCs and STs, appointing
escorts to girl students, and grants-in-aid for teachers and schools, based on performance.
Issues concerning education as a right and as indispensable to ‘self-respect’ were
important to the non-Brahmin movement of the early 20th century, followed by the
overlapping Dravidian, Self-Respect, and Backward Class movements, which articulated
the educational needs and rights of the masses.

In Southern India, even before independence, a radical secular movement led by
E.V.Ramasamy (EVR), was in full swing. It advocated the total abolishment of caste
system, renaissance of Tamil/Dravidian literature and its past greatness. The Dravida
Kazhagam (DK) was formed in 1944 with the main intention to educate the masses
especially the lower castes, from the oppression that Hinduism placed on them. EVR and
C.N.Annadurai, who was a charismatic leader with a “widespread reputation as a skillful
agitator, propagandist and organizer”, led the DK. However, personal and political
differences split them and Annadurai and about 75% of the DK members left DK to form
the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). The DMK decided to enter into politics in
1956. This was vehemently criticized by EVR who felt that politics degraded the level of
radical social reform.

Tamil Nadu’s history dates back to more than 2000 years, during which the area of the
modern state was ruled by various dynasties. The English East India Company
established a trading post in 1639 and then steadily spread its power inland. During
Indian independence in 1947, Tamil Nadu was part of the administration, known as the
Madras Presidency. The Tamil speaking areas were made into Madras State in 1956, the
state was renamed as Tamil Nadu in 1968. Tamil Nadu saw a glorious history and the
state was ruled by illustrious Chief Ministers at various time period. Education was one
of the major areas of thrust, all the leaders worked considerably hard to get Tamil Nadu
to the forefront in the arena of education. Following are the list of Chief Ministers who
led the State all these years of its struggle to excel in overall performance of socio-
economic, political fields:
Former Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu:
1944-1949 Omanthoor Ramasamy Reddy
1949-1952 Kumarasamy Rajah
1952-1954 C.Rajagopalachari
1954-1963 Kamaraj
1963-1967 Bhagathavatchalam
1967-1969 C.N.Annduradai
1969-1976 M.Karunanidhi
1976-1977 President's Rule
1977-1987 M.G.Ramachandran
1988-1988 Janaki.MGR
1989-1991 Karunanidhi
1991-1991 President’s Rule
1991-1996 J.Jayalalitha
1996-2001 Karunanidhi
2001 to present J.Jayalalitha

Education in Tamil Nadu took a concrete shape from 1952 onwards. Kamaraj and Annadurai brought in some life into Tamil Nadu's primary education system.

Prior to the period of Sri.K.Kamaraj, free education was provided upto Std. VIII. Realising the importance of education, it has been extended upto to Std. X, to all the school children irrespective of any other criteria.

Kamaraj's envisioned to encourage every child to attend school situated within one mile, middle school within three miles and high schools within five miles. Providing education for all was one of the most important ideals of Kamaraj.

As soon as he became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, he first initiated steps to open about 6000 elementary schools, which remained closed. He had henceforth abolished the caste system of Rajaji, wherein the child attended school for half a day and the other half of the day was used to pursue the family vocation.

Realizing the importance of education, many new elementary schools were opened, thus numbering to 26,700 in 1961 as against 15,303 in 1947. These schools were opened within a distance of one mile for all the villages with a population of 300 and more. This resulted in a tremendous increase in enrolment of students to 34 lakhs in 1961 as against 18 lakhs in 1954. 77.3% of the children in the age group of 6-11 years attended school in 1961 as against 45% in 1954. Thus, even poor people struggling to meet their barest minimum, were made to understand the indispensability of education for the future of their children. The total credit of the achievement of this revolutionary reformation goes to Kamaraj.

To begin with, the school authorities had to totally depend on the government for grants and for all the infrastructure of the schools. Sri.K.Kamaraj initiated steps to convene conferences for the reformations of the schools thereby involving the local people to cater
to the requirements of the schools in their locality by way of their donations and other contributions, which resulted in overwhelming response from the people as well as the school authorities. 150 such conferences were convened during 1958-63, duly attended by the ministers. Thus contributions worth Rs.6.47 crores were collected from the public. This revolutionary approach received nation wide acclamation, and it was greatly appreciated by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and others.

In order to have effective control of the schools, the elementary schools were de-linked from the control of the district Education Authorities and were brought under the Panchayat union. This approach of decentralization and delegation of control at different levels was a revolutionary one.

For the first time Sri.Khamaraj could realize his ideal of providing free education at the elementary school level in the year 1955-1956. This scheme was extended upto Std XI in 1960. The number of high schools increased to 1361 as against 471 in 1947. Similarly the number of Arts and Science colleges increased from 28 in 1947 to 50. The Teacher Training Schools increased to 146.

The State of Tamil Nadu takes the credit for implementing the Public Library Act for the first time in India. There were 464 public libraries as against only one in 1953.

The importance of technical education for the industrial development was realized when ten Engineering colleges were opened during this period. Medical college, Veterinary College, Teacher Training Schools, Agricultural Colleges were opened.

The expenditure for education for the Madras Province was Rs.704 lakhs in 1947. This increased to Rs.919 lakhs in 1954-55 and further increased to Rs.2000 lakhs in 1961-62. Considering the income of the Government as Rs.43 crores in 1954 and Rs.134 crores in 1963, about 25% of the income has been spent for the cause of education, which explicitly shows that Khamaraj’s main focus was education for all. The amount of expenditure incurred for education was 31/2 times more than that incurred during the period of Rajaji.

Khamaraj realized that getting proper education has to be considered as one’s birthright as one considers the right to freedom. Due to poverty many people had to struggle even for getting one meal a day. As the concern for earning for food was of utmost importance, parents sent their children out to work. They were reluctant to send their children to schools. He realized that providing food for children would relive parents to a great extent and it would further convince them to send their children to school. As such, even though the cost of providing noon meal at elementary school level was Rs.1 crore in 1955, Khamaraj decided to implement the scheme, for the cause of education and to enroll more children in school.

With the help of the local public, the noon meal scheme was for the first time introduced in the schools of Ettayapuram, the birth place of the great Tamil poet Bharathiyar. On the
1st of November 1957, the noon meal scheme was formally implemented as a government scheme in 4200 elementary schools providing food for 1,20,000 children. 19

C.N. Annadurai took up the Chief Ministership in 1967. He was in the office for just two years from 1967-69, during which period he brought about some good changes in the Tamil Nadu education scenario.

Anna lived his life to achieve and realize a society of equanimity. He initiated steps to legalise the marriage based purely on bond and self-respect. He strived to formulate a separate department for the welfare of the backward community. During his period it is self-explicit that every act of the government was totally based on human consideration and human value.

Department of Education
The Department of Education was well developed when DMK assumed office. Under the leadership of Anna, Tamil language gained more importance and prominence. Tamil was implemented as a medium of instruction in the colleges and free education was provided upto college level based on family income of the students. For the first time an undergraduate course exclusively for Law was introduced.

During the 23 month, DMK rule under Anna, 10 government Arts colleges and a private Arts college was started. Research Centres for Tamil and Rural Development was incorporated in the Universities.

Though the collegiate education did make progress, one could not consider that as a remarkable or tremendous achievement.

School Education
At the school level reforms were visible. Centralized valuation was introduced for SSLC board exams, which enabled quicker and early announcement of results. 2056 schools for boys and 381 schools for girls were functioning regularly.

Two Language System
During the period of Anna, the three-language system at the school level was discontinued. Government orders were issued to teach only Tamil and English. Though the Hindi teachers were rendered jobless, because of this move they have been duly absorbed in other departments, in the respective schools without any loss of their remuneration. This brings forth the innate human consideration of Anna.

Noon Meal Scheme
Anna further developed the above scheme formulated by Khamaraj. Out of 31,459 elementary schools, the noon meal scheme was available in 30,663 schools. Centralised kitchens were constructed at the premises of the Panchayat Union offices and the food was distributed in the schools.
Scholarship
Education was of utmost importance for the upliftment of the poor from their downtrodden state. In order to encourage the poor to study and progress, the government further improved the scholarship schemes.

The eligibility criteria of the income limit of the parents, for getting scholarship was raised, so that many more students could get their scholarship. The annual income limit for the Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe was raised to Rs.2000 and for backward community to Rs.1500. Free education was extended up to pre-university level for all the students belonging to families with an annual income of less than Rs.1500.

Free Textbooks and Notebooks
For the students studying in government schools, textbooks and notebooks worth Rs.56,925 was distributed. For the benefit of the blind students a printing press was created to produce books on Braille system.

Pensioner Scheme
Realising and recognizing the importance of the role of the teachers, steps were initiated to extend the pensioner scheme, even to all the teachers serving in private schools and Panchayat Union Schools.

The special Nutrition Programme was further expanded into the ‘Chief Minister’s Nutritious Meal Programme’ for children on July, 1982, during the Chief Ministership of Dr. M. Gramachandran. The cost of implementing this programme was Rs.28.74 crores for 1984-85. The scheme offers a nutritious meal to all children who want it, for all the 365 days in a year. Along with this nutritious meal scheme, a Tooth Powder Scheme was also launched.

Also, there were 4,113 child welfare centers spread all over the state. ‘Integrated Child Development Services’ were implemented. Under this scheme the child gets supplementary nutrition, nursery and pre-school education etc. The Social Welfare Department allocated 15.28 crores on the welfare of children in 1984-85.

All these schemes enabled increase in enrolment of the children schools and considerably reduced the drop-out rate.23

TAMIL NADU EDUCATIONAL POLICY AT PRESENT

The great Tamil savant Thiruvalluvar, in his incomparable work “Thirukural” has observed as follows, which is as relevant today as it was in the past.

“In the sandy soil, when deep you delve, you reach the springs below; The more you learn, the freer streams of wisdom flow”

Education, a bountiful resource forms the basis for the enrichment of an individual’s life, the uplifting of the society and the development of the nation. This government realizes
that investment in the human resource development is crucial for transforming the society and for assuring a productive life for all citizens.

EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE

The structure of education in the state, on the national level pattern with 12 years of schooling (10+2+3), consisting of eight years of elementary education, that is, five years of primary and three years of middle school education for the age groups of 6-11 and 11-14 years, respectively, followed by secondary and higher secondary education of two years each besides two years of pre-primary education. The admission age in class 1 is 5+. In pre-primary, the age group of children is 3-4 years. The higher school certificate enables pupils to pursue studies either in universities or in colleges for higher education in general academic streams and in technical and academic courses such as B.E., MBBS., Elementary Teacher Training etc., which are of different durations. A student can join the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) and Polytechnic after high school. After higher secondary or the +2 stage, the first University degree takes three years to complete followed by post graduation courses of two years. Students can also join professional courses like B.Ed., and B.L. after completion of graduation and on completion of post graduation, a student may work for M.Phil/Ph.D degree.

School Education Department

The Minister for Education, who is member of the state legislature, is in overall charge of education in the state, subject to the joint responsibility of the state cabinet. The Secretory School Education Department is the Chief Executive Officer who assists the Education Minister in all functions related to the school education in the state including planning, budgeting and administration. The Secretary is assisted by a Special Secretary (Elementary education), an Additional Secretary (Govt. Schools), Joint Secretary (Legal Matters), a Deputy Secretary (Private Schools) and six Under Secretaries.

The functions assigned to the School Education Department include:

- Overall control of education department
- Policy formulation
- Finalisation of the annual budget relating to school education
- Administrative sanctions for various projects and programmes
- Advice to other departments in education and training aspects

Implementation of the various aspects of education by the Directorates under the control of the School Education Department

1. Directorate of Elementary Education
2. State Project Directorate, District Primary Education Programme And Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)
3. Directorate of School Education
4. Directorate of Matriculation Schools
5. Directorate of Government Examination
6. Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training
7. Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education
8. Directorates of Public Libraries
9. Teachers Recruitment Board
10. Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation

School Administration
One headmaster heads each school. The head of an institution is solely responsible for institutional planning and management. He or she involves the teachers, parents, other associations etc. towards the achievement of qualitative education for younger generations.

Powers of the head of the institution:
1. Supervising the teachers
2. Maintaining attendance of teachers and records
3. Reviewing the notes of lessons
4. Sanctioning leave for teachers
5. Preparation of statement for claiming pay for teachers
6. Conducting District level examination
   (Quarterly-Sept., Half Yearly-Dec., Annual-Mar/Apr)

Generally, academic year of an educational institution begins on the 1st day of June every year and ends on 15th of April the following year.

Working Pattern Of A School: Table 2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. of working Days in a year</th>
<th>No. of working hours per day</th>
<th>Workload for a teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary and Middle schools</td>
<td>220 days</td>
<td>9.30 am to 4.30 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High and Higher Secondary schools</td>
<td>200 days</td>
<td>Urban area – 8.30 am to 5.00 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural area – 9.00 am to 5.30 pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personnel Management
Personnel Management is an important aspect of educational administration for achieving the educational goals. The education department constitutes nearly one-third of the total government employees in the state. It involves a systematic process of recruitment, selection and posting of employees and pre-service and in-service training programmes for them.

Recruitment and Selection
The recruitment and selection of the administrators, teachers, and clerks is done in two ways— one is by transfer or promotion from the feeder category and another is direct recruitment. Generally 33% of vacancies are reserved for women. But in elementary schools women teachers fill up 50% of vacancies. Others generally fill up the remaining 50%.
Posting and Transfers
All kinds of posting and transfer of teachers in all kinds of schools are made through counseling methods in a transparent and clean manner without giving room for complaints.

Welfare scheme for the staff
1. Pension Scheme for Govt. and Aided School teachers
2. Medical, educational assistance through National Foundation for Teachers' Welfare fund
3. Award for best teachers
4. The age of retirement for teachers is 58, which is common to all. However the employment is extended till the end of the academic year if the teacher retires in the middle of the academic year.

Acts and Rules
The Constitution of India provides the basic legal framework for the legislative authority between union and constituent states. The 42nd Amendment of the Constitution has placed education in the Concurrent list, making it a joint responsibility of the center and the states. In order to implement educational policies and plans effectively, both the central and the state governments enact laws from time to time. In Tamil Nadu the following Acts, Codes and Regulations provide the legal foundation in the state.

Acts
- Tamil Nadu Elementary Education Act, 1920 (repeated in 1998)
- Tamil Nadu Recognised Private Schools (regulation) Act, 1973
- Tamil Nadu Recognised Private Schools (regulation) Rules, 1974
- Tamil Nadu Compulsory Elementary Education Act, 1994

Rules, Codes and Manuals (Non-Statutory)
- Tamil Nadu Education rules, 1892
- Code of Regulation for Nursery and Primary Schools
- Code of Regulation for Matriculation Schools
- Code of Regulation for Anglo-Indian Schools
- Grant-in-Aid Code, 1956 (Inspection Code)

Service: Table 2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of staff</th>
<th>Governed by the Rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary and Middle Schools</td>
<td>Elementary Education Subordinate Service Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Schools</td>
<td>School Education Subordinate Service Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Masters, District</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Educational Service Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Officers, Chief Educational Officers, Directors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of Staff</td>
<td>Governed by the Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary Schools including Headmasters</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Higher Secondary Educational Service Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Teaching Staff</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Ministerial Service Rules,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tamil Nadu General Subordinate Service Rules,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tamil Nadu General Service Rules,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Basic Service Rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Schemes**

To achieve universalisation of elementary education and for the benefit of the students of the following welfare programme are being implemented by the government of Tamil Nadu.

1. Supply of Nutritious Noon Meal for Standards 1-10
2. Supply of free slates for 1 Standard
3. Supply of free bus pass for all students
4. Supply of free text books for all students from standards 1-5 and students 6-8 are covered under the Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme of MGR
5. Supply of uniform for students from standards 1-8 covered by the same scheme
6. Teaching Learning Materials through Operation Blackboard Scheme in elementary, middle schools
7. Provision of infrastructural facilities under Operation Blackboard Scheme, Eleventh Finance Commission, Prime Minister's Gramadoya Yojana programme, Area Intensive Programme, Educational Technology Scheme
8. Provision of Computer Education in 1197 Higher Secondary Schools by which students from std.11th and 12th are benefited
9. Provision of vocational education at higher secondary level
10. Provision of free cycles to girl students of SC/ST studying in 11th and 12th standards
11. Total Literacy and Post-Literacy Campaigns and Continuing Education Scheme for adults
12. Non-Formal education for dropouts
13. State Open Schools for those who have completed 8th standard
14. Sharmik Vidy Peeth (at 3 places)
15. Diploma in Teacher Education Through Teacher Development assistance scheme for provision of infrastructure facilities such as building, drinking water, toilet facilities in high and higher secondary schools.

**ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

The government of Tamil Nadu has set up some advisory bodies and boards for strengthening educational planning and administration in the state. Composition and functions of some important boards and committees are as follows:
State Board of School Examination

The State Board of School Examination merging erstwhile Board of Secondary Education and Board of Higher Secondary Examination was constituted in the year 2001 to advise the Director of Government Examination in all matters relating to high and higher secondary examination including teacher education examination.

Board of Matriculation Schools

The state government in 1985 has reconstituted the board of matriculation schools. The Director of School Education is the chairman of the Board. The board is the advisory body to advise the director of School Education from time to time on all matters relating to matriculation education, viz. the courses of study, syllabus, textbooks for the schools etc.

State Level empowered Committees for SSA

The implementation of the DPEP scheme in 7 districts is over. Subsequently a scheme of education for all “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan” has been introduced in the state of Tamil Nadu from the year 2001-2002. To monitor the scheme a state level Empowered Committee, District level Committee, Block Level Committee, Village Level Committee have been formed.

Other Committees that have been formed are the Committee for Revision of Syllabus to prescribe curriculum and syllabus for standards from 6-12 and was introduced in a phased manner in the academic year 2003-2004. A committee has been formed in the year 2000 for the functioning of matriculation schools and one for codification of different educational rules in the year 2202. The state government in 2000 has constituted the committee for Nursery and Primary schools.

Local Bodies

The involvement of local bodies with administration of education in general and that of primary education in particular was the result of several factors. It was to avoid the difficulties experienced in obtaining voluntary local support. Under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the local bodies were created and empowered to levy local tax for elementary education. The local bodies represented the self-government for the people and were entrusted with the important task of social service including primary education. The local bodies had been empowered to administer education in the state by the following acts: The Tamil Nadu Elementary Education Act, 1920, the Madras City Municipal Corporation Act, 1919, the Tamil Nadu District Municipal Act, 1919, the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1958 and the Madurai Municipal Corporation Act, 1971.

Under these Acts, the local bodies were managing bodies for schools, transfers and postings of teachers, maintenance of buildings, provision of school facilities, opening of new schools etc. the Directorate of School Education was entrusted only the supervision of the schools under the local bodies. The Government of Tamil Nadu in 1981 took over the service of the teachers working the panchayat union schools and the powers vested with the local bodies relating to education were transferred to the Directorate of School Education. In the year 1989 the state government transferred the powers vested with
corporations and municipalities relating to education to this directorate and all the teachers working in the municipalities and corporations were absorbed as government servants. However the local bodies are still looking after the maintenance of school buildings, which was originally under their control. At present the local bodies do not have any educational activity other than maintenance of school building.

The school buildings in corporation and municipal areas are maintained from the fund collected in the form of educational fund.

Non-Governmental Organisation's Contribution
Non-governmental organization plays a vital role in the educational growth in the state. The government of Tamil Nadu has safeguarded the interests of the minority people in the state and allowed generously to open educational institutions for the welfare of the minority people and others. The various codes, acts and rules empower the state government to fix norms and conditions for the opening and functioning of the private schools. Majority of the primary and middle schools are managed by the Education Department. However, the panchayat unions look after their maintenance of building. Non-government organizations also manage a substantial number of primary and middle schools although majority of them are private-aided receiving cent percent grants from the state government.

The Christian Missionaries are the biggest voluntary organizations managing educational institutions in Tamil Nadu. The following are the Christian Organisations running educational institutions in the state:

1. Church of South India Diocese (C.S.I)
2. Roman Catholic Diocese (R.C.Mission)
3. Tamil Nadu Evangelical Lutheran Church (T.E.L.C)

Apart from the Christian missionaries, the R.C.Mission, the organization of Muslim educational institutions and various welfare associations and educational trusts are also running educational institutions in the state.

Community Participation
Community participation is available in the form of village education committees. The village education committees play an important role in meeting the educational needs of the people in the area. The committee cooperates with the teacher in the enrollment of more children, provides help for acquisition of land, building facilities and also render help assistance for maintenance of school buildings.

Parent Teacher Association
Each school is having a PTA. The PTA in the state was established in the year 1964 with the object of creating a good relationship between the teachers and parents and facilitating school improvement schemes by all ways and means. The objectives of the association are
- To develop good relationship and better co-operation between the parents and teachers
- To guide the students for their improvement in social, economic, cultural and educational activities
- To develop leadership qualities among students
- To give necessary assistance to the parents and teachers to publish literary magazines, organizing cultural programmes, library meetings etc.

The functioning of the PTA is supervised at the district and state level authorities.

It is the vision of our Honorable Chief Minister Dr. J.Jayalalitha, to make Tamil Nadu the first state in the development of education in India. Accordingly, the Government in School Education Department has formulated the following policies for implementation:

- To provide schools in all habitations where there are no schools if the minimum population is 300 and there is no school within a radius of one kilometer.
- To enroll all school age children in schools before 2003.
- To provide five years of schooling for all these children before 2007.
- To provide eight years of schooling for all these children before 2010.
- To eradicate drop outs fully before 2010. To improve the basic amenities in schools.
- To improve and enrich the syllabus.
- To improve the quality of education from the pre-school to the higher secondary.
- To ensure Minimum Levels of Learning.
- To impart refresher training to teachers.
- To eradicate illiteracy.
- To maintain confidentiality in public examinations and release the results to the entire satisfaction of the user community.
- To recruit meritorious teachers through written examination within the reservation policy.
- To distribute quality textbooks at fair prices on time.
- To open village libraries.
- To give importance to the vocational education of school students.
- To disseminate health education in schools.
- To involve the parents and also the local bodies in the management of schools to a great extent.
- To impart computer education compulsorily so as to transform the society into a knowledge driven and digitally literate one.

The Directorates under the control of School education department implement various schemes promoting these objectives of the government. The Directorates which shoulder the main responsibilities like the Directorate of Elementary Education, State Project Directorate of District Primary Education Programme and Sarve Shiksha Abhiyan, directorate of School education, Directorate of Matriculation Schools, Directorate of Non-Formal and adult Education and other Directorates which provide resource and
service support Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training, Directorate of Government Examinations, Teachers Recruitment Board, Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation and Directorate of Public Libraries endeavor and strive hard to help Tamil Nadu achieve new heights in the field of education.

**District Primary Education Programme In Tamil Nadu**

Many programmes are implemented in Tamil Nadu with the objective of imparting quality primary education. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is one such programme implemented in selected districts to achieve the goal of universal primary education for all by 2000 A.D.

The Phase I districts viz. Dharmapuri, Thiruvannamalai, Cuddalore and Villupuram have been selected for the implementation of DPEP on the criterion that female literacy of these districts were below the National average. In Phase I districts DPEP is implemented from 1994-95 to 2000-2001. Pudukottai, where Total Literacy Campaign has been successful, Perambalur district with a low female literacy rate and Ramanathapuram district which is backward in socio-economic conditions in the State, have been selected for implementation of DPEP Phase II. The implementation of DPEP in Phase II districts is from 1997-98 to 2002-2003.

Several schemes aimed at universal enrolment and retention, and minimizing stagnation and dropout in Tamil Nadu have been in operation in Tamil Nadu for a long time, though a number of them gained added importance during the last decade. The Mid-day meal scheme, Free Uniform schemes, Free text books and Attendance Scholarship to girls schemes and some of the notable ones. Probably the most important of all the schemes, has been the Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme. It was well conceived and well received in the State, by other states, by the center and by international agencies such as the United Nations International Children’s Education Fund (UNICEF), and has had a positive effect on school enrolment. As though prompted by its outcome, on 15th August 1995, the Government of India Launched a nationwide School Meal Programme (National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education) to give a boost to UEE by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance in primary classes through supplementing nutritional requirements of children attending primary schools.

However in Tamil Nadu, the scheme has not been free of problems. These include pilferage and poor quality of food supplies, lack of storage and cooking facilities, poor infrastructure, unhygienic surroundings, water scarcity delayed arrival of materials and poor pay of staff.

The Policy Note proposed to implement from 1999 a Special School Health Programme, called the Vazhvoli Thittam. The teachers are trained in the symptoms of diseases for reporting to the medical officers visiting the schools, and to teach subjects on health education.
In Tamil Nadu the ICDS programme, the Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project with the World Bank assistance and Non-formal education schemes are implemented through a number of projects and schemes by the state government.

While it is evident that the state of Tamil Nadu and the DPEP have addressed most of the goals of EFA, they have not yet fully achieved most of them. Though Tamil Nadu's suggestion to successful implementation of population control schemes propagating the norm of two children per couple, as parents have to cope with a variety of opportunity costs even in freewheeling public delivery system, this decline should have meant better childcare. But despite the plethora of childcare schemes by the state, girls are still at a disadvantage. In the country as whole, there is a seeming lack of direct correlation between the percentage of out-of-school girls and the number of child workers. This raises the larger issue of "the missing girls"—those who are neither at school nor in productive labour. Tamil Nadu has a large share of them.

Important Achievements During 2001-2003

- During 2001-2002, the scheme "Education For All" was introduced in all the districts of the State to provide basic education to all the children in the age group of 6-14. This scheme will extend up to 2010. Rs.1649 crores is allotted for this scheme during the tenth plan period. Tamil Nadu is the first state in the country to receive the project approval.

- Under the scheme of Education for All, activities like opening of new schools, construction of school buildings, construction of Block and Cluster resource Centers, training of teachers, providing drinking water, toilet facilities and maintenance of schools have been undertaken at a cost of Rs.184.22 crores in 2001-2003.

- 756 elementary schools, 676 middle schools, 220 high schools and 260 higher secondary schools were opened during 2001-2003.

- For the first time, a loan assistance was obtained from NABARD for the education department and the work started for the improvement of infrastructure facilities like class rooms, laboratories, drinking water and toilet facilities in 346 high and higher secondary schools in two phases at cost of Rs.99.00 crores.

- Infrastructure facilities were provided to elementary and middle schools to the tune of Rs.96.06 crores from Finance Commission Grant, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, District Primary Education Programme, etc.

- Single window system was introduced in the admission to the Teacher Training Institutes, by which about 4661 meritorious students get teacher training at a low cost every year.

- About 1560 additional students selected through single window system will get training in the Teacher Training Institutes by the increased intake of students.

- Steps were taken to impart training to about 20000 affected students of derecognised Teacher Training Institutes among whom 15670 are under going first year training.

- Instant Supplementary Examinations were conducted for the students who fall in one or two subjects in the annual examinations from standards 6-12 and during 2002, 56063 students (10th - 12th alone) were benefited.
- A transparent Counseling system was introduced in the matter of transfer of teachers and ensured smooth transfer.
- To improve the standard of education, orders were issued to appoint B.Ed., qualified Middle Grade Graduate Teachers in 6,7,8 stds.
- 10,178 vacant teacher posts were filled.
- Orders were issued to select meritorious B.T and P.G teachers through competitive examination without age limit.
- A separate Directorate was formed in order to inspect the matriculation schools so as to make them function with the minimum facilities.
- Orders were issued to open 867 village libraries. Tamil books in 7362 titles and English books in 3160 titles were bought during these two years at a cost of Rs.1474 lakhs for the public libraries.
- A Young Talent Scheme has been launched to enable each student to excel in some sphere of activity like music, arts, oratory etc.\textsuperscript{21}

**ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**

With the aim of providing Universal Elementary Education for all children upto the age 14 years, the Compulsory Elementary Education Act was passed in the year 1994/95. With a missionary zeal, the State Government has taken concrete steps and a series of initiatives to provide quality universal elementary education. Tamil Nadu is considered to be the forerunner in implementing schemes to achieve Universal Elementary Education.

**Objectives**

- Achieving enrolment of all school age children.
- Ensuring retention at least up to eighth standard of all the children enrolled.
- Ensuring quality education leading to every child attaining minimum levels of learning competencies.
- Ensuring harmonious and all round development of the child's personality.
- Micro-level decentralized planning and management through community participation.

**Compulsory Elementary Education Act, 1994**

The Act endeavors to ensure that parents send all the school age children to schools. With the combined efforts of the community, local enthusiasts, parents, youth and teachers, intensive awareness campaigns and propaganda have been conducted. Due to the sustained efforts of the State Government, 98.93% of the school age children in the primary stage are enrolled in schools. Comprehensive and effective strategies will continue to be adopted with the active participation of the community to enroll the remaining 1.07% of school age children left out, in 2003.

**Opening of New Primary Schools**

Easy accessibility to schools ensures cent percent enrollment. The policy of the state is to provide a primary school within a radius of 1 km., wherever there is a population of 300 and to establish a middle school for every two elementary schools wherever necessary.
Accordingly, 304 primary schools were opened and 479 primary schools upgraded as middle schools in 2002-2003. During 2003-2004, it is proposed to open 372 elementary schools and 422 middle schools.

Private Schools
Private managements play a significant and commendable role in the field of education by establishing and maintaining institutions of high standard. Recognition is given to primary and middle schools opened by private managements without grant-in-aid from 1.6.1991.

Redeployment of surplus teachers
About 9229 posts of teachers have been identified in Panchayat Union, Municipal and Aided schools as surplus as per the teacher pupil ratio of 1:40 and the surplus posts have been redeployed to needy schools as a result of which, the vacant posts of teachers in many needy schools were filled up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>School Building</th>
<th>Toilet Facilities</th>
<th>Drinking Water Facilities</th>
<th>Electrification</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. In lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>11th Finance Commission Phase I</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>479.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>11th Finance Commission Phase II</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>479.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>150.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pradhan Mantri Gramodoya Yojana</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>1431</td>
<td>1431</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1452.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>281</td>
<td>2347</td>
<td>3949</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>2561.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nursery Schools
The ‘Code of Regulations for Approved Nursery and Primary Schools’ governs the nursery and the primary schools, 1991. Under the Code, about 3216 approved schools are functioning in the state.

Improvement of quality of education in middle schools
To handle the enriched syllabus of English, Science and Mathematics, government have issued orders to appoint B.T. qualified middle grade graduate teachers to handle 6,7,8 classes. Government have also issued orders to regularize the appointments of B.Ed.

**Mobile Library**
To inculcate the reading habit of the students in middle schools, library books are distributed through the mobile library scheme to all elementary and middle schools by utilizing the existing mobile science vans in 29 educational districts.

**Infrastructure facilities**
A school must be well equipped to achieve total enrolment and retention. Through sustainable financing and long-term partnership between the center and State, the government of Tamil Nadu is keen on providing infrastructural facilities. The following infrastructure facilities were provided under various schemes in the years 2001-2003 in addition to the facilities created under the District Primary Education Programme and the Education For All Scheme (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan).

**Welfare schemes**
To enroll all the school age children and to reduce the dropout rate in schools, various welfare measures are implemented by the government. In the year 1982, M.G.Ramachandran, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu introduced the Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme was introduced. From the year 1985-86, the scheme of free supply of uniform to the noon meal beneficiaries in standards 1-8 was implemented. From the year 1986 onwards, free textbooks are supplied to all children from Std.I to V and For VI to VIII stds. Covered under the Noon Meal Scheme.

The beneficiaries for the year 2002-2003 under various welfare schemes are given below.

**Table: 2.5 - Welfare Schemes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welfare Schemes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. In crores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free Text Books</td>
<td>58,86,125</td>
<td>25.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Uniforms</td>
<td>33,70,390</td>
<td>41.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Swajalbhara'
Under this scheme of rural water supply, the government of India provides funds without any commitment to State Government but the school Parent Teacher Association or Community must contribute 10% of the initial cost and also bear the maintenance cost. So far, 522 proposals have been submitted to government. The remaining schools will also be covered under this scheme.

**Rain water harvesting – “Water for Future”**
To improve the ground water level, steps were taken to harvest the rainwater in all schools and the message of “Harvest Rain water” has been effectively conveyed to all school children. Rainwater harvesting structures are also being put up in schools.
Joyful Learning
The child is the focus of any educational activity. Child centred education alone can yield the best and fruitful results. The teaching learning process must be a pleasure both to the teacher and the taught. The basis of joyful learning is the child’s natural inclination towards activities like drama, song stories, dance and entertainment. With the financial assistance from the UNICEF, training has been given to teachers. The training has had an excellent impact both on the performance of the teachers and the students. The concept will continue to receive attention and get extended to self-learning by the children.

Model Schools
Under this scheme, 838 schools have been identified as model schools and entrusted to the care of 838 officers to provide quality education in an improved atmosphere.

Best School Award
Three schools in each district excelling in improvement activities resulting in increased enrolment rate with special thrust on enrolment of SC/ST children, retention and completion rate and based on school efficiency parameters like PTA activities, participation of the community to reduce the dropout rate and development rate etc., are selected and encouraged by presenting awards on Teacher’s Day every year.

Education For All
This government is committed to provide elementary education compulsorily to all. Accordingly, the District Primary Education Programme was launched in four districts during 1994-95 in the first phase and three districts in the second phase in 1997-98. this scheme has been implemented for standards 1-5. the programmes has achieved commendable results in enrolment, retention, completion and gender equity. The scheme closed on 30.6.2003. Considering the progress attained by the District Primary Education Programme, “Education For All” (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) scheme is being implemented in all the districts (including DPEP districts) for 1-8 standards for a decade from the year 2001 to 2010. The approval of Government of India has been obtained to the tune of Rs.1649 crores in the Tenth Five Plan (for the years 2002-2007) for this scheme. The expenditure for this scheme is to be shared between the Centre and State in the ratio of 75:25.

The Objectives of the Scheme are as follows:

- Enrollment of all school age children in schools by 2003.
- Completion of 5 years of schooling by 2007.
- Completion of 8 years of schooling by all children by 2010.
- Imparting quality elementary education with emphasis on life oriented education.
- Bridging all gender and social gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.
- Total eradication of dropouts by 2010.
Approval of the Scheme during 2001-2003 to the tune of Rs.184.22 crores

- 756 primary schools; 1512 teachers posts
- 676 middle schools; 873 teachers posts
- 385 Block Resource Centres
- 4087 Cluster Resource Centres
- 29175 Village Education Committees at school level
- Grant of 21954 schools to purchase furniture at the rate of Rs.2000 per school.
- Grant of TLM grants of Rs.500 for each of the 98786 teachers working in schools in stds. 1-8.
- Teaching learning equipment grant of Rs.10000 per school for 756 new primary schools.
- Teaching learning equipment grant of Rs.50000 per school for 676 new middle schools
- Maintenance and repair grant of Rs.5000 per school for 20540 Govt. Schools.
- Buildings for 87 Block Resources Centres (at the rate of Rs.6lakhs per building)
- Building for 234 Cluster Resource Centres (at the rate of Rs.2 lakhs per building)
- 964 two classroom buildings (at the rate of Rs.3 lakhs each)
- 716 three classroom buildings (at the rate of Rs.4.50 lakhs each)
- Toilet facilities for 2749 schools (at the rate of Rs.20000 each)
- Drinking water facilities for 2536 schools (at the rate of Rs.15000 each)
- School level training programme for the resources persons of Block Resource Centres
- Preparation of Modules for the training programmes and training of resource persons
- Functioning of 359 EGS centers with 9046 children; conduct 1190 bridge courses for 21110 children
- Involvement of 62 NGOs for the education of 58099 disabled children in the formal schools. Each child is paid Rs.1200 annually
- Identification of children, conduct of awareness campaigns, medical camps, issue of identification cards and provision of scholarships to children with disability
- Supply of play materials to early childhood education centers; Orientation training to anganwadi / balwadi workers
- Introduce computers to all the children in standards 6,7 and 8
- Tie-up with reputed computer education agencies at the district level to conduct computer literacy classes
- Innovative activity for education of girls and SC/ST children in tailoring, embroidery, soap making and other cottage industries
- Special coaching classes for SC/ST children, children with disabilities in par with other children in 9200 centres
- Training for at least 20 days in a year to the teachers to improve the teaching skills
Important Activities to be Implemented during the year 2003-2004 at an outlay of Rs. 340.31 crores

- 372 new primary schools; 744 teacher posts
- 422 middle schools; 422 teacher posts
- 55 Block Resource Centre buildings
- 398 Cluster Resource Centres
- 1136 two-classroom buildings
- 809 three-classroom buildings
- Drinking water facilities for 3445 schools
- Toilet facilities for 4887 schools
- 5800 early childhood education centers
- 8750 residential school camps
- 10400 linkage centers
- Training to 2.07 lakh teachers
- Training to 53340 BRC, CRC, VEC members.

Committees of Education for All
The Committees constituted at State, District, Panchayat Union and Village levels effectively monitor the “Education For All” scheme.22

TAMIL NADU PRIMARY EDUCATION POLICY—AN OVERVIEW

In the present world, it is education that determines the level of prosperity and the welfare of the people. The entire developmental process of the State depends on the crucial nature of education and research. This is very much likely in a country like India wherein the nature of educational policy containing a built-in flexibility adjustable to the changing circumstances is imperative.

In Tamil Nadu the vision to evolve flexible educational policy has been a task that has been taken up by the State Government with verve to achieve the goal of education for all which invariably fulfills the 56 year struggle to achieve Universalisation of Primary Education in the State.

As per 1991 census, in Tamil Nadu, when then population recorded 5.59 crore, the literacy level was pretty sore. 1.80 crore people were illiterates, 64% among them being women, sixty-five percent Schedule Caste and 79% Schedule Tribe.

In order to hasten the literacy level and to promote ‘education to all’ it is necessary for the government to formulate certain constructive schemes fore-viewing the multi-dimensional problems of illiteracy the State is in. It is interesting to note that 10 lakh children attain the school-going age every year and a considerable number of children dropout from school due to various reasons. There is backlog of 180 lakh of illiterate adults.

In the present government the concerned department has taken steps to provide schools in those hamlets where there are no schools so that accessibility will increase.
Improvement in the infrastructure and environment of the schools, and making learning an enjoyable experience in order to reduce the drop-out rates.

Imparts value based education to provide a foundation for the socio-economic development of the State.

The above goals of the government have been the area of interest and the main necessity of the State. This chapter will give a detailed picture of Tamil Nadu educational policy for the year 2000-2001 with regard to the primary elementary education.

To promote elementary education and to get to the goal of ‘education to all the Government has formulated various schemes and are implementing them effectively to promote education.

Elementary education plays a vital role in the development of the Nation and the Constitution of India entrusts with each State to provide compulsory and free elementary education for all children up to the age of 10 years. But to implement this important commitment there are many bottlenecks.

The state has taken up the hard task for the provision of school buildings, classrooms, and vacancies for teachers and learning and teaching aids. The policy of the Government is to provide elementary schools in all hamlets having a population of more than 300 people within a radius of one kilometer. In pursuance of the above objective the Government opened 312 and 400 elementary schools in the year 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 respectively. The government proposes to cover rest of the hamlets not covered so far and schools will be provided wherever necessary.

The enrollment percentage in Tamil Nadu is near complete. In standard 1 the percentage of enrollment for girls is 19.43% and for boys 98.50%. The policy of the government is to identify and assess non-enrolled children and to find appropriate solutions.

At present the drop-out rate is 14.41% whereas children completing up to standard 5 has been assessed as 44%. The policy also insists on continuous upgradation of present standard of elementary education by way of improvement of the method of teaching, appointment of teachers and imparting suitable orientation training to the teachers for enhancing the skills of the students.

The Government in order to improve the welfare of the students of primary and middle schools has implemented few schemes to provide facilities such as appointment of teachers in accordance to the strength of the students in primary schools, with some single teacher schools to appoint 2 teachers in primary schools from 1998-99 onwards and the expenditure incurred by the government is 25.31 crore. This scheme will be continued during the academic year 2000-2001 and books will be distributed beginning of the academic year itself.
Funds under the Rural Development Scheme will be assessed and be used to provide building facilities for 920 primary schools and for 1988 primary schools recognized as one and buildings standing with no classrooms and other facilities.

DPEP is one such scheme implemented in certain districts in Tamil Nadu and Rs. 300/- has been allotted per year for purchase of stationary item for every Panchayat Union School with three or less number of teachers and Rs. 500/- for other schools from the year 1996-97 and from 1998-99 municipal schools have been included for this benefit. Rs. 150 lakhs has been provided for this purpose.

- The then, Tamil Nadu Governor, Ms. Fathima Beevi’s suggestion for a uniform curriculum and syllabi for all schools throughout the country is really inviting. This could perhaps fulfill the needs for our citizens seeking jobs and could be more than a help to students migrating to other states.23

THE SCHOOL EDUCATION IN TAMIL NADU

As per study undertaken in 1997, it has been observed, that after all the efforts taken by the Government, Tamil Nadu seems to have the highest number of illiterates.

We have celebrated half a century of India’s Independence. It is natural that we should look back on our achievements as well as our failures, with regard to school education, so that we could look forward to a better future in the next 50 years. We may pat ourselves on the back for the immense expansion of school education in the number of schools, the children enrolled, the teachers in position, the textbooks published and the examinations conducted.

In Tamil Nadu the number of schools; 30,619 elementary schools, 5,503 middle schools, 3,574 high schools, and 2,734 higher secondary schools totaling 42,430. In these schools 3,07,971 teachers teach 1,23,89,725 pupils in various standards. The matriculation schools have increased from a handful to 1,700 in the year 1997.

The Mid-day Meals Scheme, restructuring of the educational system into 10+2+3 with Higher Secondary and Vocational Education, the formation of separate Directorates of Collegiate Education, School Education, Elementary Education, Non-Formal and Adult Education, Government examinations, Teachers Education, Research and Training (DTERT, The Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation and Sports Development Authority are some of the highlights of the changes in the Tamil Nadu educational scenario in the last fifty years.3

If however, we look back at the development of the quality of the school education in Tamil Nadu during the last fifty years, we have a different story to tell. John Ruskin stated, "Great Nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts- the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art. "We tend to wonder if we have only a book of words! John P. Lewis in “India’s Quiet Crises” makes the charge, "The Indians are better talkers than doers, better planners than executors. Too often the
execution is half-hearted, inept or bogged down in cross purposes. "Is our achievement on our oratorical skill rather than deeds and implementation?"

Late Mr. C.Subramaniam, former Governor of Maharashtra said on September 8, 1997 that, "development programmes in the country over the last 5 decades had suffered severe set backs mainly due to the decline in educational standards". Mr. T. Rajagopalan in his tow thought provoking articles in the Hindu dated May 10 and May 14 1997 has ably brought out the “Decadence in Education” and Dismal Education Scenario". He has hit the nail on the head when he says, “Demand for education has been growing steadily but the quality has not kept pace with it, “and that”, the intrinsic value of education is no longer recognized although pious platitudes are mouthed quite frequently”.

After all efforts, we have the highest number of illiterates. The former Prime Minister of India Mr. I K. Gujral, observing that the literacy rate has moved from 30% in 1947 to 52% five decades later said, “We are behind other developing countries including those of Sub-Saharan Africa.” We have been unable to achieve the constitutional goal of free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years. The drop-out rate continued to be 15.06% up to the primary stage, 30.27 up to the middle stage, 62.53 in the high school stage, and 80.48 in the higher secondary stage.

There is no value-based education with ethical contents. School education has not seriously promoted values, character training, respect for individuals and diversities, self-learning, discipline and self-reliance. While we talk a lot about secularism, non-violence, attitude of give and take, team spirit, tolerance, and concern for others, these have not received the significance due in education. Scientific temper, environmental consciousness and social service have not taken roots. On the other hand, indiscipline, corruption, dishonesty and disunity are caused by a faulty system of school education.

Education imparted is not relevant to life and living. John Dewey’s dictum, “Education is life” is conspicuous by its absence. There is no joy in teaching and learning. Teachers’ professional commitment and academic responsibility are yet to be achieved. School education has become commercial with the collection of donations followed by high cost tuitions. Substantial changes are required in educational infrastructure, attitude of teachers, curriculum, textbooks and teaching methods during the next fifty years if education is to be an investment in our country. It is essential that we plan boldly and immediately for a revitalization of school education in Tamil Nadu during the next fifty years bearing in mind the following points of view.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

School education has been so far so cut up into various departments that there is little or no cohesion, coordination and united approach. Each department goes in its own direction or on all directions or no direction. If the Universities and colleges could have a Tamil Nadu State Council of Higher Education, there is more need for a Tamil Nadu Council of School Education to guide and lead the affairs of schools from the pre-school level to the higher secondary level. Things were said to be better when there was single
Director of Public Instruction to plan and implement education on all fronts. It may be fruitful to evolve such an apex body or infrastructure now, which will be appropriate to the prevailing confused conditions.

It may also be considered whether the Indian Educational Service should not be revived to provide dynamic leadership, status and discipline in education. The Kothari Education Commission of 1964-66 rightly recommended that "the creation of the Indian Educational Service or I.E.S is a step in the right direction and if organized on proper lines, such a service will help the progress in education." It is not clear why this is not been done, though there are I.A.S., I.F.S., I.P.S., and other central services, Educational administrators in charge of Human Resource Development should be of the highest caliber with independence and initiative and without fear or favour.

The I.E.S will attract bright young men and women and strengthen educational administration through constructive supervision. Today school education administrative structure at the highest level with professionalism and responsibility can solve all the unsolved problems relating to nursery schools, matriculation schools, teacher training, textbooks, vocational education, examinations, teacher grievances and agitations, upgrading and inspectorate, reduction of school bag and decentralization.

VALUE-BASED EDUCATION

Today there is all around erosion of values with the resultant pollution of public life. The faulty system of education is the training ground for corruption. Corruption is eroding our democratic institutions. Wealth without work, success through short cuts, financial indiscipline, lack of accountability, casualness and lack of seriousness of purpose are the order of the day. Success at any cost is not honourable. Today there is a moral crisis in our society.

The root cause lies in our educational system that has failed to build up the value system of a whole generation. In a value-oriented educational system, children will be taught to achieve success with honour, honesty and hard work. It is time that teachers and parents teach children valuable lessons in character and citizenship. We should aim at shaping good citizens who will be the ornaments of the society with good attitudes, habits and manners, and not arrogance, hypocrisy and sycophancy.

Teachers should remember that they have duties and responsibilities to fulfill and not right alone. They should show by example that not all education is concerned with learning values which are nationally accepted. Our curriculum, textbooks and teaching methods should be redesigned to promote such values. Students and teachers taking to the roads should stop.

FUN AND JOY OF LEARNING

Children in schools today are forced with the burden of learning. There is fun and joy of tension free learning. But there is drudgery, stress and torture of innocents. The weight of
the school bag prevents relaxed learning. Learning is geared to memorization, marks and grades. Children go to school with bent backs and come back with heavy load of homework.

Sub-standard textbooks with inaccuracies, dullness and long descriptions do not hold the attention of the children. There has to be load reduction. At the same time the quality of learning has to be improved through activities, practical work, skill formation and teamwork. Inflicting a heavy dose of over-education and stressing individual achievement prevent joyful learning. Library work, self-learning and group learning activities provide the fun and joy of learning. These aims have to be built into the school curriculum.

EXAMINATIONS

We have reached a stage when we have several examinations but not education. Education is sacrifice at the altar of examinations. There is excessive memorization and the aim is to get marks by hook or crook. In consequence, there are tuitions and coaching centres, leakage question papers, defective questions, obsession of notes and guides, cheating, copying, and bribing the supervisors, going behind the evaluators, re-totaling, inaccurate valuation and litigation.

Examinations are not fool-proof but malpractices are manifold. Examinations are tricky issue but steps should be taken to bolt out the evils.

It has been suggested in some states that the Board examinations at the 10th and 11th levels should be abolished. One solution suggested by one author H.S.S Lawrence is to abolish the SSLC Examination and the Public Examinations at the XI standard. Today facilities are amply available to all students to study till the XII standard even in rural areas. The Higher Secondary public examination at the end of the XII standard is quite adequate to maintain standards.

In these days of liberalization and transparency we should depend upon the wisdom of the headmasters and the teachers to assess and evaluate the student performance continuously and issue certificates up to standard XI. There is often a conflict with the CBSE in some of the deadwood and replaced with fresh grafts. Teachers too will realize their responsibilities and accountability.

LITERACY AND UNIVERSALISATION

School education has failed in the matter of literacy and universalisation of elementary education. Both stagnation (failures) and wastage (drop-outs) are taken for granted. By and large schemes introduced in this regard have been unsuccessful. By the turn of the century, India the largest democracy in the world will have exactly 50% of the world’s illiterates. The National Literacy Mission has lost its vigor. "Each one Teach one" or Prime Minister’s "Each higher secondary student teach five" is yet to be implemented. Educational administrators have not shown a drive or dynamism in these matters.
Educational leadership with inspiration and example is lacking in this matter. If each higher secondary student, every teacher and each non-governmental organization voluntarily takes the responsibility to alleviate illiteracy, using the existing facilities in schools, the whole nation will be literate.

Both educational administrators and teachers have to become more professional and academic than before. Annual school inspections are not done regularly. Even Teachers Associations for elementary school teachers who had reviewed teaching work monthly have disappeared. The directors have to do a lot to tone-up school education and achieve the objective of literacy and universalisation of elementary education.

Work culture for teachers is an important need and duty. The physical conditions in the schools deserve much improvement. 13.5% of the primary schools in India do not have a proper building, 40% do not have a black board, and 59% do not have drinking water! Let all concerned with school education heed the words of the former President Shri K.R. Narayanan, who recently urged teachers “to evoke an exciting teaching practice to inspire the youth and not to make their profession a business.”

The new millennium begins with promises. The revised framework of the present policy promises to reach a literacy target of 75% by the year 2007, which is expected to fulfill the constitutional goal to a certain extent. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which is a flagship programme of the national government, promises to achieve the goal of the universal primary education by 2005 and the goal of UER by 2010 (five years ahead of the international commitment made at Dakar). This would mean that all the children in all the states would complete at least five years of schooling (or its equivalent through non-formal means) by the year 2005. All of them would transit to upper-primary schools and complete at least another three years of schooling by 2010. Are these targets reasonable? Can they be achieved without changing the strategy of intervention? Is it not necessary to focus on equity concerns and build state-specific strategies for overcoming regional disparities and meeting the educational needs of the marginalized? The major effort of the government of India to achieve the above goal through the introduction of the District Primary Education Programme and its effective functioning shall be reviewed in the next chapter.
Endnotes


8 B.C.Mehta and Kranti Kapoor, “Class Origin- Destination, Relationship and Education”.


