

Education And Democracy

Education and democracy are inextricably linked in social thought and practice. Democracy, in all of its historic and contemporary forms, has played a pivotal role in shaping conceptions of public education. Classic contributors to modern political thought and commentary, as well as those who framed modern arguments, have dealt specifically with the educational necessities of establishing and maintaining a democratic polity. They have generally reflected on the tensions between the socialization of a democratic nation's subjects (i.e. as acculturated, law abiding members) and the education of its citizens (i.e. critically thinking, active participants). Both education and democracy have evolved in response to historic geographic-based concerns (expansion, rapid urbanization, and globalization), significant demographic shifts (especially the cultural diversity brought by immigration), and economic growth (industrial technologies). Capitalism in all of its historic forms (e.g. pre-industrial, industrial, post-industrial, globalization) and through its dominant technologies (e.g. mechanized agriculture, mass commodity production, transportation, and global information networks).

Democracy and Education was first published in 1916. John Dewey called it -An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education, which means that it is more than just a description of the empirical relations between "democracy" on one hand and "education " on the other. Dewey wanted us to learn is that democracy is the key question of every modern philosophy of education. It is not on the edge but at the heart of the matter. Democracy and Education and its basic ideas are now a hundred years old and that jubilee this year was much acclaimed throughout the world of education. And in fact Democracy and Education until today is a central reference for all who want to study the philosophical nexus between general education and the development of democracy. In his time Dewey was a well sought expert for the implementation of "progressive education" in relation to it.

The Role Of Education In Political Development

Many countries are the victims of political instability and its infinite problems. These problems include unemployment, corruption, equality among races of people, unequal distribution of wealth in a country, increasing inflation rate and many more. The root cause of all the problems is lack of education. Lack of education has been the major cause for any nation success or its failure. The education can have many positive effects on the politics of the country.

If there will be education and literacy rate will be high, people will be aware that who the right leader is for them. Illiterate people cannot differentiate between the good or bad characteristics of people. They do not have the criteria's for them. They only vote for the person who belongs to their cast or geographical area or who somewhat have influenced them by giving some money. Such politicians are not worthy to be the leader of any country. So the education is a key to success of the nation political development.

If the leaders will be educated and will have proper qualifications for becoming the politician only then the nation can develop and grown. It is said that state poses such a leader as are the people of that state. Political system should be in the hand of educated people because it the administration of a country.

Role Of State And Civil Society In Education

It is a fundamental misunderstanding regarding the role of civic engagement in the development of a country – it is perceived as existing in the absence of a robust state. In addition, it is also often felt that the presence of a strong state reduces the need and scope of civic engagement. However, the existence of a healthy and active civil society does not preclude the existence of a robust state, and vice versa.

As for governance, there is a delicate balance between the decisiveness and accountability. Since the emergence of state, there has been a range of tensions between the civil society and the state, on the fact that power is exercised by the state at the expense of the citizens' sovereignty, although the degree varies according to the characteristics of political regimes and the level of distance between ruling institutions and citizens. It is said that "smaller the extent to which citizens feel represented and serviced by public institutions, the bigger the governance crisis. The greater the degree of separation between the actions of rulers and citizens' expectations and control over rulers' actions, the greater the governance crisis". Social accountability allows more interaction between the civil society and government, and helps them acknowledge each others' limitations, and recognize that collaboration is necessary for effective and sustainable development.

In places where the demands outweighs the governments ability to provide educational services, NGO have come to the rescue and have done a great job in filling the educational gaps and provide a key to a more sustainable and accountable education system.

Human security requires civil society engagement. It has to grow bottom-up and be protected top-down; the very individual whose security and dignity is of concern, is very much responsible for effective establishment of human security.

Role Teachers' Organisations In Education Development

Role of Teachers' Associations in Education Policy and Planning Education plays a unique and specific role in advancing human society, and as teachers play an essential role in educational advancement, teaching should be regarded as an esteemed profession. Teachers contribute to the economic, social, and cultural development of society, and thus it is essential that the teaching profession be granted a high status not only for the sake of the quality of education, but also for the progress of society as a whole. Just as the teaching profession must be granted a high status, so should teachers' associations. Teachers' associations are among the most committed supporters of improvement in the quality of education. Teachers bring their professional knowledge and experience to any discussions of change in educational systems, and thus the collective voice and expertise of teachers and their professional associations is critical for any effective educational planning and policy making the active participation of teachers and their associations in the process of transforming education, and in educational planning and policy making. Authorities and teacher associations should actively seek and agree on the most effective ways to establish regular methods of communication, consultation, and coordination with one another in all aspects of education planning and policy.

Politics Of Inclusion In Education: Equity and Group Diversity

Statistics on disability in India vary widely, and accuracy of statistics is always questionable. However, almost all of the statistics available point to the gaps in the education system, the marginalization of children with disabilities, and the need of the Government of India to step up their efforts to reach their goal of "education for all." The Government of India (GoI) did its first and only national survey to date on the population of people with a disability, from July/December, 2002. In December 2003, one year later, Report No. 485, the 593 page Disabled Persons in India was published in conjunction by the National Sample Survey Organization, Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, and the Government of India. Although statistics vary across the board, depending on the year, surveyors, methods used, and other extraneous factors, this survey is considered most legitimate and accurate by governments and organizations across the globe. The Ministry found that there were 18.49 million people with disabilities in India, or about 1.8% of the population. Data from the World Bank differs in both the ages of the sample group and the statistics, but draws a dramatically different picture. According to the World Bank, 38% of children with disabilities ages 6-13 are not in school. In addition, starkly contrasting with Kalyanpur's interpretation of the National Census, the World Bank states that 70% of children with disabilities ages 5-20 have attended a school at some point in their life, and that 90% of these children have attended a mainstream school. This data is further supported by data from the National Census, which states that of the children with disabilities in school in 2002, 94.8% of these children attend a mainstream school, and only 5.2% of children with a disability attend a special school. It is important to emphasize that these statistics do not include all of the children with a disability out-of-school, but only those that were attending school in 2002. Therefore, a large percentage of the population is still not receiving any type of schooling.

Alarming, the World Bank states that almost all children with disabilities do not continue their education past primary school. There are several areas across which people with disabilities receive unequal services in India. One of those is the difference between urban and rural areas and the services available in both. 75% of people with disabilities live in rural areas in India. This is an overwhelming majority. The number becomes worrisome in comparison to where the majority of services are offered; which is in urban areas. Less than 15% of national services for people with disabilities are located in rural areas, and of those, most are expensive and/or private. The discrepancy in services is directly reflected in educational achievement and enrollment in schools. Drawing data from The National Census, states, "In terms of educational levels, only 11% of children with disabilities between the ages of 5-18 years in urban areas (less than 1% in rural areas) were enrolled in special schools, while 55% of adults with disabilities were illiterate (59% in rural and Inclusive Education in India 28 40% in urban areas), with only 7% in rural and 18% in urban areas having completed secondary education. Another area of inequity between persons with disabilities is gender. The Government of India National Census pointed out the extreme inequities between girls and boys with a disability. In number, there are fewer girls than boys with a disability. People with disabilities in India are also discriminated against based on their type of disability.

The National Census did not break down types of disability according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM IV) or a similar text, but rather, by the categories "locomotor, multiple, mental retardation (intellectual disability), mental illness, blindness, low vision, hearing and speech.

The policies of the new millennium are the most inclusive of those to date. But, just as the

policies of the past, will these policies remain words on paper? The Government of India has fallen short of their goal for all of the policies of the past 66 years. Yet in the past decade, there have been several promising pieces of legislation and schemes: 2005 Action Plan for Children and Youth with Disabilities, the 2006 National Policy for People with Disabilities, the 2008 Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) and the 2009 Right to Education Act-as well as continuing with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme. So is there a lack of political will that is preventing full implementation of policies, or lack of governmental resources and capacity? It seems to be a combination of both. To enable an inclusive system of education, the Government of India needs to consolidate the responsibility for education under the Ministry of Education, and abolish the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Although the 2006 National Policy for People with Disabilities mandated the change of special schools into various types of resource centers, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan states that people with disabilities should be educated in the least restrictive environment, which could potentially be a special school. Therefore, this scheme and this policy actually contradict each other. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment could still support students with disabilities by continuing to provide grants for these resource centers, but ultimately, it is imperative for inclusion that students of all ability levels are receiving services under the same ministry. This directly relates to the definition of inclusion and the social model defined above, because the Ministry of Education will have to adjust to accommodate people of all ability levels, including everyone.

Accountability of the Government of India and its implementing partners is imperative for ensuring successful implementation of policy. One of the best ways to do this is to ensure that citizens are well informed about these policies and schemes. A system of reliable monitoring is imperative for evaluating the success or failures of a policy or scheme. Training teachers in teaching methods that include students of all ability levels, as well as spreading awareness to teachers about the importance and benefits of inclusion, is one of the most important parts of implementing a system of inclusive education, because the teachers are the people on-the-ground who are going to accommodate the students. Building accessibility is absolutely imperative for students with disabilities to be included as an equal member in their school. But what is typically more challenging for mainstream schools who are trying to become inclusive is converting their curriculum to fit students of all ability levels.

National Integration And Education

National integration is essential for any nation with socio-cultural, religious, linguistic and geographical diversities. And for a country like ours, it is still more necessary. As we know, India is a very large country. We have the second largest population in the world. A unique feature of our country is that all the major religions of the world are practiced here such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism. There are more than one thousand languages that people of India speak. There are also great varieties in costume, food habits, and social customs. Geographically, our land is diverse and there are amazing differences in climate. Despite all these differences India is one political entity. We have to co-exist with each other peacefully, respect the culture and religion of our fellow Indians. This is possible only when national integration is realised in true sense of the term. National integration is necessary also for the security and development of the nation. India is a very large country. We have the second largest population in the world and our land area is about the same size as Europe minus the former Soviet Union. About one thousand six hundred fifty-two languages and dialects are spoken in our country. From among these eighteen have

been given special recognition by our Constitution as National languages of our country. In fact, national unity and integrity, i.e. national integration has been one of the most important priorities of our country. In the course of analyzing the issues related to unity and integrity of the country.

- National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though we belong to different castes, religions and regions and speak different languages we recognize the fact that we are all one.
- Identification of people with nation as a whole and not with sectional identities.

IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL INEGGRATION

The term national integration has two words: nation and integration. A nation is a country with a unified socio-economic and political structure. It denotes a body of people who have a feeling of oneness, built on the basis of common history, society, culture and values. This feeling of oneness binds the people together in to a nation. In general terms it is this feeling which is known as national integration. National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though the individuals belong to different communities, castes, religions, cultures and regions and speak different languages, all of them recognize the fact that they are one. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation.

National integration means "creating a mental outlook which will promote and inspire every person to place loyalty to the country above group loyalties and the welfare of the country above narrow sectarian interests." India is a nation having great diversities. The people who inhabit this nation belong to different races, communities and castes. They reside in different geographical regions and speak different languages. They believe in and practice different religions and have varied life styles. But with all these diversities, they all are Indians and they feel like that. They may have many religious identities such as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, or Zoroastrians. They may also be identified as Punjabis, Tamils, Malayalis, Bengalis, Manipuri, and so on, or South or North or North-East Indians. But their national identity is supreme.

FORCE PROMOTING TO NATIONAL INTEGRATION:

A. Constitutional Provisions

The Indian Constitution has made provisions for promoting and ensuring national integration. It has accepted socialism, secularism, democracy, liberty, equality, justice and fraternity as the goals of Indian political system. Citizens have been empowered with fundamental rights and their fundamental duties have also been prescribed. The Directive Principles of State Policy directs the State to promote equitable economic development, eliminate social discrimination, and promotion of international peace and security. And above all, the provisions related to various institutions and processes have been geared towards national integration.

B. Governmental Initiatives

The governments have also been making efforts to promote national integration. A National Integration Council has been set up to consider issues related to national integration and recommend suitable measures to be taken. A Single Planning Commission prepares plans

for economic development of the entire country and one Election Commission conducts elections.

C. National Festivals and Symbols

National festivals also act as an important unifying force. Independence Day, Republic Day, and Gandhi Jayanti are festivals that are celebrated by all Indians and in all parts of the country.

ROLE OF EDUCATION ON NATIONAL INTERGRATION

In view of promoting national integration in November 1960, the Education Ministers of all the States met to consider this matter. The problem of National Integration was considered in all its gravity. It was then decided that a committee be constituted under the leadership of Dr. Sampurnananda for promoting national and emotional unity in the country. The committee apart from considering other aspects of the problem, devoted thought to the role of education in promoting national integration. The Committee was set up in May 1961 and it began its work soon thereafter. Education and the Recommendations of National and Emotional Integration Committee. The Committee recommended that the aim of education should be merely to give or exchange knowledge, but also to bring about the all round development of personality of the students. Through the medium of education, the qualities of sacrifice and tolerance should not be evolved in the student behaviour so that, the feeling of national unity may be fostered.

National integration is essential for any nation with socio-cultural, religious, linguistic and geographical diversities. _ A nation is a country with a unified socio-economic and political structure. It denotes a body of people who have a feeling of oneness, built on the basis of common history, society, culture and values. This feeling of oneness binds the people together in to a nation. India is a nation having great diversities. The people who inhabit this nation belong to different races, communities and castes. They reside in different geographical regions and speak different languages. They believe in and practice different religions and have varied life styles. But with all these diversities, they all are Indians and they feel like that. National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though the individuals belong to different communities, castes, religions, cultures and regions and speak different languages, all of them recognize the fact that they are one. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation. It was during nationhood emerged and the need for national integration was realized.

Education for Citizenship Building

Citizenship education is important. Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens; citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process. Democracies depend upon citizens who, among other things, are: aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens; informed about the social and political world; concerned about the welfare of others; articulate in their opinions and arguments; capable of having an influence on the world; active in their communities; responsible in how they act in today's complex and diverse society as citizens. Democracy can be achieved through liberty, equality, fraternity and justice.

Education As A Human Right

It has been formally recognized as a human right since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This has since been affirmed in numerous global human rights treaties, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO) Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981). These treaties establish an entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for all children; an obligation to develop secondary education, supported by measures to render it accessible to all children, as well as equitable access to higher education; and a responsibility to provide basic education for individuals who have not completed primary education.

Furthermore, they affirm that the aim of education is to promote personal development, strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms, enable individuals to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, friendship and tolerance. The right to education has long been recognized as encompassing not only access to educational provision, but also the obligation to eliminate discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality. In addition, education is necessary for the fulfilment of any other civil, political, economic or social right.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) further strengthens and broadens the concept of the right to education. These underlying principles make clear a strong commitment to ensuring that children are recognized as active agents in their own learning and that education is designed to promote and respect their rights and needs. The Convention elaborates an understanding of the right to education in terms of universality, participation, respect and inclusion.

This approach is exemplified both in the text itself and in its interpretation by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the international body established to monitor governments' progress in implementing child rights.

Perspectives introduced in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- The right to education is to be achieved on the basis of equality of opportunity.
- Measures must be taken to encourage regular school attendance and reduce dropout. It is not sufficient just to provide formal education. It is also necessary to remove such barriers as poverty and discrimination and to provide education of sufficient quality, in a manner that ensures children can benefit from it.
- Discipline must be administered in a manner consistent both with the child's dignity and with the right to protection from all forms of violence, thus sustaining respect for the child in the educational environment.
- The aims of education are defined in terms of the potential of each child and the scope of the curriculum, clearly establishing that education should be a preparatory process for promoting and respecting human rights. This approach is elaborated in the General Comment on the aims of education, in which the Committee on the Rights of the Child stresses that article 29 requires the development of education that is child centred, child friendly and empowering, and that education goes beyond formal schooling to embrace a broad range of life experiences through which positive development and learning occur.
- In its General Comment on early childhood, the Committee on the Rights of the Child interprets the right to education as beginning at birth and encourages governments to take measures and provide programmes to enhance parental capacities to promote their children's development.

The World Conference on Education for All (1990) set the goal of universal primary education for the year 2000, a goal not met but subsequently reaffirmed for 2015 at the World Education Forum in 2000. This Forum also committed to an expansion and improvement of early childhood care and education, the elimination of gender disparities in education and the improvement of quality in education. In addition, the international community and leading development institutions have agreed to the Millennium Development Goals, expressed in the Millennium Declaration, which commit them to ensuring that all girls and boys complete a full course of primary education and that gender disparity is eliminated at all levels of education by 2015. More recently, the 'International Conference on the Right to Basic Education as a Fundamental Human Right and the Legal Framework for Its Financing' (Jakarta, Indonesia, 2–4 December 2005) adopted the Jakarta Declaration. This emphasizes that the right to education is an internationally recognized right in its interrelationship with the right to development, and that the legal and constitutional protection of this right is indispensable to its full realization.

Rights Claims And Entitlements

There is an advantage in taking human rights necessarily as claims and not only as entitlements. Claims suppose an actual carrier of the correlative duty. Those correlative duties are, to use an expression employed by Kant, perfect rights. However, understood only as entitlements, rights could convey claims, but not necessarily. In the approaches of rights as entitlements, the attribution of rights to someone does not depend on the actual correlative attribution of some duty to another. It is perfectly possible to suppose a legal system with some fundamental right properly enacted without the proper enactment of its corresponding duty (that he called its primary guarantee). Therefore, when rights are to be described as entitlements (as what is done in the human rights speeches), a reasonable rule is to take the language of claim as more basic or primitive, ruling that every right as an entitlement.

Promotion of Equal Rights In Education

Equity in education cannot be divorced from equality. In other words equality cannot be meaningful without equity. They are intimately related to each other. Equality implies that before the law, every citizen is equal to another. Hence the value of equality implies that every individual must be given equal opportunity to develop his innate abilities and talents. No one should be stopped from "going up the ladder" except if he himself lacks ability to go up. There should be no discrimination between one individuals and another on any ground whatsoever in a democratic country where every citizen enjoys equal rights. It implies that: The state must not discriminate between citizens on the basis of religion race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. Everyone must be equal before the law. There must be no discrimination on the basis of religion, caste or creed in the use of public places. Untouchability must be completely eradicated. Everyone must have equality in respect of fundamental rights, right to contest elections etc. Every religion must be treated as equal. From the religious point of view every citizen must have the right to practise and profess his own religion.

Those who have remained backward till now must be raised to the same level as others so that the unequal gap should be reduced and they should be brought at par with those who are developed in comparison to under developed. Those who must be given special facilities for this purpose include: scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, backward castes and classes, and women and children.

Thus, similar treatment to all individuals from the point of view of rights and opportunities is called equality. It also means not to deprive any individual from his right is called equality. The right of equality has been provided to all in our Indian Constitution but special concessions (facilities) have been provided to scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, backward castes and classes, women and children.

Equity means freedom from bias or impartial treatment. Impartiality is implied in equality because equality is not possible without equity. Equity is supplementary to equality. It means providing due share to all those who has been deprived off by whatever reason or were not in a position to avail the facility which may have brought them up at par with developed people.

Equality and Equity in Education and the Constitution of India

The Constitution of India declares the right to equality as a 'fundamental right'.

Equality before law: Under Article 14, equality before the law or equal protection of the laws is guaranteed to all. It declares that "The state shall not deny to any person equality before the law or equal protection of the laws."

No discrimination: Article 15 prohibits discrimination on certain grounds. Discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth is forbidden. This Article also provides equal right to make use of public places.

Equality of opportunity: Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. It declares that "No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them."

Article 15 and 29: 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 class of citizens or for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes."

Article 15 (3) reads, "Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children" Provision has been made for separate institutions for girls.

No untouchability: According to Article 17 untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is prohibited.

Right to open Institution: Article 30 of the Constitution gives the right to all the classes to open institutions of their own will. The Article states:

"All minorities whether based on religion or language shall have right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice."

"The States shall not discriminate against any educational institution in respect of grant-in-aid, on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language."

Special facilities to weaker sections: Special facilities are provided to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes and women. Facility of reservation has been provided to scheduled tribes, scheduled castes and other backward classes.

Article 46 lays down, "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the *scheduled castes and scheduled tribes* and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."

The handicapped children are a weaker section of the people. Their education and economic improvement thus become a responsibility of the government under Article 46 of the Constitution.

Need And Importance Equality And Equity In Education:

Human right: Education has been considered as a Universal Human Right. The idea of equality and adequate opportunity to all was highlighted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948. As a sequel to this, the principles of "non-discrimination" and "right to education" were strongly advocated. These two principles inherited the concept of "equality of opportunity in education." Therefore, depriving any person of education on the bases of religion, race or class will be deprivation of Human Right.

Essential for democracy: India is a democratic country. Democracy is based on the principle of equal freedom and equal rights for all its members, regardless of race, religion, sex, occupation or economic status. Society equal rights and equality of opportunities are provided. Hence equality and equity in education are needed because it is through the education to all the people in a democracy that the success of democratic institutions is assured.

Egalitarian society: Equality and equity in education are needed for the establishment of an egalitarian society—a society in which equality and social justice should be the norms.

Economic development: Equality and equity in education are needed for the economic development of the nation. The desired success in economic development cannot be achieved without providing equality and equity in education.

Nations Advancement: Equality and equity in education will ensure a rapid advancement of a nation. Education is now an investment. If the people have equal opportunities to get education they will have a chance to develop their natural talent and thus enrich the society.

Search of Talent: Equality and equity in education will extend the search of talent among all the people of nation. There will thus be available people with specialized talents for specialized jobs in a large number and the society will be benefitted.

Closer Link: Equality and equity in education will develop a closer link between the moreover needs of a society and the availability of the skilled personnel.

Socializing Pattern of Society: Equality and equity in education can help in bringing about silent revolution in the process of establishment of the socializing pattern of society.

Modernization: Equality and equity in education are needed for accelerating the process of modernization in social, economic, political and education field.

Achieving equality and equity in education

The following are the ways and means for achieving equality and equity in education:

To stop wastage and stagnation: There is huge wastage and stagnation at the primary stage. The constitutional directive of compulsory and universal education cannot be realized till the problem of wastage and stagnation is effectively solved. The causes of wastage and stagnation have to be found and removed. The following suggestions are given for reducing wastage and stagnation:

Financial assistance has to be given. Parents will have to be educated. Part-time education will have to be provided. Social orthodoxies like indifference towards girls' education and narrow outlook towards co-education have to be removed. The school distance should be reduced. Maximum number of schools will have to be opened. School environment should be improved. Curriculum should be improved. It should be child-centered, activity-centered, experience-centered, life-centered and community-centered. Play-way techniques of teaching should be introduced. Facilities for educating the children of underprivileged and backward sections of the society have to be increased. Entry will have to be regularized. Multiple entries should be allowed. Non-formal education has to be provided.

Provision of compensatory education: The concept of 'compensatory education' for the culturally deprived and socially disadvantaged is now universally recognized as a necessary condition of equality and equity in education. By compensatory education is meant provision of such special training and incentives as would compensate for the initial disadvantage experienced by the children of the socially and economically weaker sections and the culturally deprived groups. A person may not receive education or his education may remain incomplete due to poverty, child labour, low culture, poor hygiene, malnutrition, over-crowded homes, social environment and backwardness. Children from the lower socio-economic classes experience great difficulty in positively responding to school education unless their initial disadvantages are compensated and they are brought on level with others.

In India compensation has taken the form of special facilities and incentives. Article 15 (4) and Article 46 of the Constitution have made provision for special advantages for the socially and economically backward classes, particularly for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Several concrete measures that have been taken in this direction. Some of them are as follows:-

Institution of scholarships. Reservation of seats in institutions of higher learning and quota system for jobs. Relaxation of requirements for admission to higher education. Remedial education and special coaching classes. Health care and mid-day meals. Provision of free school uniform, text-books and stationery. Lump sum grants. Expansion and school facilities like building and equipment, appointment of more teachers and special trained teachers.

Common School System: A very vital component of the overall strategy for securing equality and equity in education is the Common School System. These schools will be open to all children irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic conditions or social status. In these schools access to good education, in terms of enriched curriculum, will depend not on wealth or class but on talent. No tuition fee will be charged in these schools. These schools would meet the needs and aspirations of the middle and lower classes, without unduly taxing them. Concrete steps for translating the concept of Common School System into action have to be taken. In order to achieve this objective, the existing Government, Local Body and Government-aided schools have to be transformed through quality improvement into genuine neighbourhood schools. Private schools also should be similarly transformed in course of time by making them freely accessible.

Selection on merit: Higher education by its nature is something which has to be earned. There is nothing like a 'right' to higher education in the absence of possession of the abilities required to profit from such education, nor can there be any compulsion for it. Higher education should be equally accessible to all on the bases of merit, ability or talent irrespective level of higher education can be taken to mean provision of opportunities for everyone who possesses the 'merit' required for it.