

M.Ed – 4Th Semester , Course- 2.4.3a

Four Major Approaches to Educational Planning

There are four major approaches to educational planning.

1. Social Demand Approach:

This approach was used in the Robbins Committee Report on Higher Education in Britain. In India too, this approach is a popular one while opening new schools and colleges in particular.

In this method are involved the following steps:

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(a)To estimate the proportion of students completing school education and are likely to enter into higher education.

(b)To estimate how many of these successful school leaving students would actually apply for admission to colleges.

(c)To determine how many of the applicants should be given admission to higher education.

(d)To determine the length and duration of the study.

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Thus, the major issue involved in this approach is to forecast future demands for seats keeping in mind social and educational trends as well as demographic changes. The underlying assumption in this approach is that expansion of education is beneficial to the economy and thus, additional expenditure on education would not create a burden too heavy to bear.

This approach is more prevalent in those societies which favour traditional cultural values, where decisions are taken on the basis of public opinions (in a fragile polity and sometimes in a democracy) and in societies where the social environment is generally pessimistic in nature.

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The approach is based on currently expressed preferences and does not take into account public expenditure on education vis-a-vis the benefits as the demand for education may far exceed the resources available in a vast country like India. Also, it sometimes leads to a mismatch between the output of higher education and the demands of the economy.

2. Social Justice Approach:

This approach emphasizes justice to the disadvantaged sections of society and is based on Article 45 of the Indian Constitution. This approach is aimed at making special provisions for the socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged communities for a longer duration. This includes opening Ashram schools for tribal areas, special concessions and scholarships, incentives and relaxation.

3. Rate of Returns Approach:

According to this approach, investment in education should take place in such a way that the returns from the investment are equal to the returns from other kinds of investment of capital, e.g., investment in industry. This principle is known as 'equi-marginal returns' in economic theory and could be extended to educational sector.

This approach treats education as an investment in human capital and uses rate of returns as a criterion in allocation of financial resources. The approach implies that if the rate of return is low, expenditure on education should be curtailed.

However, in reality, it is difficult to apply this approach to education due to problems associated with measuring rate of returns in education.

An educated person's earnings or rate of returns depend upon his/her innate intelligence, parental socio-economic status, motivation and aspirations. Hence, it is not easy to attribute the rate of returns only to education acquired. Hence, this approach is least frequently applied to education.

4. Manpower Planning Approach:

In this method, the general demand for and the capacity of supply of human resources in different streams of and at different levels of the educational sector are estimated.

The approach asserts that the system of education produces the right quality of human resources with desirable knowledge, attitudes and skills in the right numbers and thus, education is directly linked with economic development.

The application of the manpower planning approach depends on these factors:

(a) An appraisal and analysis of the existing employment conditions and the system of education,

(b) Planning the system of education vis-a-vis the manpower needs of the economy, and

(c) Using the financial resources (which are limited) in an optimum way so as to fulfill the demands of the employment sector without incurring wastage on account of unemployment.

(d) Making an appraisal of the number of students enrolled, the number of existing teachers and their qualifications, enrolment in teacher education institutions (availability of future teachers), as well as the existing number of school buildings, equipments, infrastructure and other facilities.

(e) The requirements of the employers regarding occupational and/ or professional qualifications for employees, their levels of training and abilities should also be assessed.

The manpower planning approach takes note of the fact that the teaching profession requires approximately 60% of the highly qualified human resources of a country which competes with the demand for manpower in other economic sectors.

A detailed projection of the demand for human resources is difficult due to the uncertainty of productivity trends. Some developed countries such as Norway, France and Sweden estimate their future manpower needs so as to meet the demands of the economy whereas others such as Great Britain estimate the numbers to be educated on the basis of students' demands.