

CHAPTER I :

I N T R O D U C T I O N

- Introduction
- Historical Perspective
 - A Global Survey
 - The Indian Context
- Equality of Educational Opportunity
- Dual System of Schools
- The Scheme of Chapterisation

1.000 Introduction :

The special capacity to think rationally, makes the growth of the homo sapiens not only multidimensional but also qualitatively richer in comparison to other less endowed organisms. The gradual transformation of a helpless infant into a robust adult and his bubbling sounds into refined ways of communication, is indicative of the capacity of the human being to reach higher plane of development. This development, however, cannot take place in isolation and exclusive to the society. The environmental factors do play a very dominant role in shaping up the growth of the personality, either singly or collectively through interaction with each other. If the environment is congenial, the growth may be fullest, otherwise it may be hampered.

The attitudes, beliefs and values, normally cherished by a society have an important influence in shaping this environmental factor. If the society assumes that the higher mental capacity is limited to a particular caste, class, sex or race, and others are devoid of this capacity, then it may think that there is ^{no} need to give equal opportunities to all. Such type of thinking is mostly prevalent in the countries,

where the rulers want to maintain status-quo in the society and have their own vested interests. Another assumption is that the State has the supreme authority, there the 'individual will' plays a minor role. The more liberal view is that all the individuals are endowed with different abilities and potentialities and these potentialities are not restricted to any class, caste, race or sex. So, according to each one's capacity the opportunities should be provided by the State. Because, the uninhibited growth of human personality also depends upon the political set up, a country has. And this is possible, where 'democracy' is a form of government, which is wedded to the beliefs of human consideration and social justice.

Many factors in the environment influence the growth of an individual. These factors can be social, psychological, economical and pedagogical etc. Individuals learn by interaction, observation and react accordingly. This can be systematic or unsystematic. The process of imparting and receiving knowledge in a systematic way is education. Education influences the child's development as a whole. The aim is to create a perfect and total person with

awareness and knowledge of life. The method of achieving these goals will, however vary according to the educational system prevailing in the society. The word 'education' also includes all the disciplines or fields of study taught in the school that concerns itself with this activity, process or enterprise. As an activity, education may be formal or nonformal, private or public, individual or social. The school is a social institution specifically set up by the society, where educational programme based on certain facilities is provided.

At some stage of the history, education was merely used as a tool to acquire more knowledge and wisdom. It was considered to be an exclusive treasure of the privileged. The elite alone was allowed to dip into its honeycomb. To the common crowd - the rabble, it always remained a forbidden fruit. The need to use education as a vehicle to induce social changes for enrichment of human life was not properly appreciated. The awareness of the strength of education which gradually dawned upon the thinkers, however led to a total metamorphosis in the approach to education, and its relevance to the society. This itself was a revolution of its own kind and subsequent thinking on the subject has opened up

innumerable avenues for education and its use for the betterment of the society. Gradually, the society started appreciating its role in breaking up social barriers and the idea of giving equal educational opportunities to all started gaining footing.

In order to appreciate the growth of the idea of educational opportunities, it is essential to delve into the various factors which have influenced the thinking on the subject. Moreover, it also becomes necessary to study these factors from the overall historical perspective to know how the educational opportunities were made available and to whom they were made available at different stages of history.

1.100 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE :

The historical perspective is given under the two heads as - (i) A global survey, and (ii) the Indian Context.

1.110 A Global Survey : During the earliest part of Greek civilization, education was imparted for preparing citizens for the defence of their city-states. There were three classes of citizens in Greece. The lowest in the strata were the

producers of food and clothing. The middle class was composed of soldiers. The thinkers or philosophers formed the highest and ruling class. In Greece, the emphasis upon public education came after 300 B.C. Among older people education had been restricted to special classes such as skilled craftsmen. But there was no control by a priestly caste; and the opportunity for education was open to all the sons of citizens. But the opportunity was also confined to them. Girls were not admitted to the schools of Athens and received only limited training in Sparta. And everywhere both boys and girls of the lowest and more numerous classes were generally barred, and slaves the most numerous of class of all were altogether excluded. As a result, only about one in ten of the whole population could attend school in Athens or receive training in the Spartan system. The Greeks did not conceive of universal education.

Education in ancient Rome (450 B.C.) was imparted within the family. Boys were required to memorize the text of the laws. This does not prove that there were schools. Schools were (100 B.C. to A.D. 100) private institutions in this period. And educational opportunities were given on the basis of the social class.

At the beginning of the Middle-Ages (500 to 1500 A.D.) the Church gradually started taking up cudgel for education and used it to provide some teachings of a religious nature. The Monastic Schools came into existence. Poor students secured their maintenance by begging...or by working. The schools did not charge fees but accepted donations from wealthy patrons. After Charles the Great (724 A.D.-814 A.D.) came to the throne in 768, he turned his 'palace' into a school. The children of the common people came within the scope of Charles's endeavour. And finally he caught a fleeting vision of universal education and compulsory attendance at schools. But education during the medieval times suffered from an important drawback - exclusiveness. Few could take full benefit from it and the feudal society did not allow any downward filtration of education. This type of education was of course, suitable for maintaining status-quo in the society but it came under heavy strain when the feudalism itself had to give way to nationalism.

Even in 14th and 15th centuries (renaissance), the peasants and the workingmen were not yet free. The lower guilds were held in subjection. It was the rulers, courtiers,

scholars and artists who freed themselves from the tradition and exhibited virtues, like self assertion and personal independence. But one of the greatest defects of the renaissance was that the humanists had no conception of universal education and there was no message for the common people. The new studies appealed however to groups of people who might not have attended the medieval schools, such as the nobles and ruling classes, merchants and bankers. When the poor were admitted into the new schools, they were drawn in the upper social strata. But the humanists with a few exceptions did nothing to provide an appropriate education for the poor. The education of girls made some progress among the upper classes.

The reformation era (15th and 17th century) brought changes in the traditional system of education. Martin Luther favoured the education of the common people. In the vernacular schools, which developed after the reformation, the children of the common people, boys and girls, received an elementary education. Luther was the first modern writer to urge compulsory attendance and proposed that the State should pass such legislation and enforce it. However, the

reformation was educationally destructive in England. The Monastic Grammar schools were abolished and England was left poorer in educational opportunities. Private schools of the most diverse qualities grew up in villages and towns. Thus, England developed a laissez faire attitude in education which was to delay the development of an educational system and of universal opportunity for schooling until the latter 19th century, and of secondary education until the 20th century. The educational opportunities were greatly extended to the common people, catholic and protestant, boys and girls, alike during the reformation period.

The development in the continent had its impact in the American colonies also. The vast majority of American settlers were less ambitious and quite contented. Women and the mass of unskilled labourers were at best taught little more than reading and writing. The slaves expected no education and received none. It is in such a situation that the Puritan German Sects started advocating literacy. The small businessmen and skilled artisans and even farmers needed some arithmetic, practical measurement and calculation. The land surveyor was an important functionary in every

community in the 17th century; and a knowledge of navigation had to be acquired by ship captains and handwriting and book-keeping by merchants. Four main types of educational endeavor characterised the 17th century: apprenticeship to manual vocations; reading and religious instruction directed by churches and missionary societies; the formal secondary and higher education of the Latin schools and colleges; and practical schooling in mathematics and its applications to accounting and navigation. The educational differences between the different social classes and the different regions within the colony were greater than those between the different colonies. The power of legislation in colonial times was in the hands of the rich and well-to-do. The apprenticeship laws were therefore an example of one class legislating for another class, the rich for the poor, partly for the benefit and the control of the poor, and mainly for the benefit and relief of the rich. Throughout the colonies schools were supported by taxes, tuition fees, and income from lands. The problem for them was to eliminate tuition fees and rates, to make the schooling free so as to ensure that education might cease to be a special privilege and become a public service, open to all. The schools were made tuition-free about the

time of the civil war (1861-65). In the colonial period the foundations were laid for public school systems, upon which the next period began to build.

In Russia also before Alexander I (1801), the education was designed for a special class. Until the end of the 19th century, four types of educational planning were seen : education for agricultural needs - the poorest in all respects; education for vocational trades - primarily concentrated in industrial centres, rather provincial in character; education for nobility - well supported and organised; and education for religious purposes - strictly Greek orthodox in its context. Very little was done about education for peasants. Peasants worked as serfs and had no opportunity to improve their position. Due to the efforts made by men like Pnin and Zhukouski, the peasants of Russia gained their freedom from serfdom and with it gained some right to education. In 1824, Ushinski, emphasized the significance of labour. Subsequently, Lenin and his government demanded that illiteracy be eliminated. Thus, the foundations of the soviet educational system are laid in 1919 programme of the 18th Congress of the Russian Communist Party in which it was stated that the task of the Soviet school was to fulfil

the original purpose of the October revolution of converting schools from aristocratic and bourgeois dominated selective education to complete destruction of the division of society into classes. Among others, the provision to supply all the students with clothing, food and educational materials was there.

1.120 In the Indian Context :

The developments elsewhere in the world had their repercussions also in India, where traditional education was increasingly becoming ill-suited to accommodate new thinking on liberalism. The existence of universities like Nalanda and Taxila does prove the importance attached to education during the ancient period. But it is doubtful whether India had any organised chain of feeder schools to prepare the pupils for higher studies. Even the traditional pathshalas which were supposed to have been imparting education to the deserving and inclined pupils could not have been adequate enough to cater to the needs of the population.

In the vedic period, the right of the individual to the fullest development was honoured. During that period upanayana, a ritual, was made obligatory for all. It means that the

parents had to perform a function in the presence of a teacher to admit their child to the school. It was declared that a man can discharge his debt to ancestors by providing proper education for children. Thus, during those days all the three castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas) received the rudiments of literacy and religious education. Gradually the society started becoming rigid. And then the mass education was not possible, because of the rigidity of the caste system which restricted education to the narrow confines of the upper castes. The education of a pupil was necessarily determined to a large extent by the particular functions or occupations assigned to him by the society. Sudras (lower caste) were generally denied the study of the vedas because they were presumed not to have the tradition and the aptitude for acquiring the language and spirit of the vedic literature. The status of women was also like that of the Sudras. The rigidity of the caste system was further accentuated by the sixth century during which the decline of the creativity seen in the earlier centuries, had become increasingly noticeable. The fact that the famous universities like Taxila and Nalanda went into ruins and subsequent oblivion shows that they ceased to enjoy State

patronage. Against this background, the attempt of Buddhism to propagate general education for the whole community is worth mentioning. From about the beginning of the Christian era, Buddhism went around doing its job quietly to spread education through its robed monks. The rise of organised public educational institution may be justly attributed to the influence of Buddhism.

The position remained unchanged even during the medieval period during which some Koranic schools and centres of higher learning (Madrassas) were established in places like Agra, Lahore and Delhi. The emphasis on religious learning followed the same pattern as that of the ancient India. The separation of religion from education and the growth of secular studies came much later, towards the Middle of the nineteenth century.

The advent of the British in India marks a watershed in the history of education in India. The process was, however, very slow and the pattern took considerable time to emerge. Still, for the first time official thinking on education was stressed upon and constitutional provisions were resorted to. The Missionary clause contained in the Charter Act of 1698

laid the foundation of Charity schools for the education of European and Anglo-Indian children. The Indian students were covered by the educational policy of the Company only subsequent to 1765 when it became a political power as well. This resulted in the establishment of Calcutta Madrassa (1785) and Banaras Sanskrit College (1791) with the professed goal to prepare the pupils to become eligible "to be appointed for subordinate posts of the administration".

This was the beginning of the oriental school of educational policy. While it marked a clear departure from the policy of proselytization, it only tried to step into the shoes of Hindu and Muslim rulers by encouraging traditional oriental learning in Sanskrit and Arabic without, in any way, attempting to teach Western knowledge to the Indian people. The severe opposition of Missionaries and active thinking inside the Company finally led to the Charter Act of 1813 embodying the basic principle that the education of the Indian people was included within the duties of the Company and this should be imparted in a "Secular and conservative" fashion. Since the resources of the Company were meagre, stress was laid on the slow dissemination of

education from the top - the downward filtration of education. Mountstuart Elphinstone was the first to propose that Company should also spread education among the masses by encouraging indigenous institutions. The choice of a medium of instruction, however, still plagued the administration and balance was tilted towards English after the famous Minutes of Macaulay (1835).

The Wood's Educational Despatch (1854) proposed a network of graded schools and also the establishment of universities for higher education. The primary aim of the grant-in-aid was to encourage the Missionaries to engage in the very congenial work of elementary education to a larger extent. The Indian Education Commission (1862) recommended that primary education should be handed over to the local bodies for management. It also recommended that private bodies should be encouraged in the field of education. Lord Rippon (1819-1880) went still further and directed that local-self government should be regarded as "a means of popular education by which alone progressive communities could cope up with the increasing problems of the government". The liberal policy followed by Lord Curzon (1859-1917) in grant-in-aid added momentum to the expansion of primary

education. His observation that pace of primary education has been slower since 1882 was based on facts.

1.121 A General Review of the Development of Private

Enterprise In the Educational Field : The efforts of the non-official enterprise in this context are worth mentioning. They could be grouped under four principal heads - (i) educational institutions conducted by the Missionaries, (ii) the educational institutions conducted by officials of the Company in their individual capacity or by the non-official Englishmen resident in India, (iii) educational institutions of modern type conducted by Indians themselves, and (iv) the indigeneous institutions. The most notable contribution, however came from the first and the third group of institutions.

During the period prior to 1813 the elementary schools teaching through the modern Indian languages formed the bulk of missionary educational enterprise. The first text books in Indian languages were actually compiled by the missionaries. The education of women - which the officials had avoided also got impetus during this period. But during the period between 1813 and 1853 the missionaries shifted emphasis

to teaching through English medium. This change was mainly guided by considerations other than purely education. Still, by the end of 1853, the statistics show that the Mission activity in education was almost equal to the official enterprise if the Protestant organisations alone are considered. In spite of their professed goal to use education for converting the Indian population to Christianity, the Mission Schools were pioneer in giving model curriculum and syllabus based on latest scientific and social thinking. Their contribution to the modernising of Indian education is therefore immense. Simultaneously with these mission schools, efforts by the British residents in their private capacity like those of David Hare (1775-1842), J.E.D. Bethune (1801-1851), and Mountstuart Elphinstone (1819) cannot be underestimated. The Bombay Native Education Society established in 1819 with the initial objective of training Anglo-Indian and poor European children, expanded its activities to include Indian students also and by 1840 it had as many as 115 primary schools. The efforts of Indian private enterprise may not measure up to those of the foreign ones in quantitative terms but in the context of social revolution, their influence is much more deep rooted. The forerunner among them was Raja Ram Mohan Roy

who synthesised in himself all that was good in oriental and occidental learning. Subsequently, the attempts of Sir Syed Ahmed, Gokhale and many others made an impact in the field of education.

To sum up the historical perspective, one may mention that, starting from 16th century, the influence of religion on education became more tolerant. The mass illiteracy led to notable philanthropic enterprises on their behalf. The advancement of science, and the doubts raised by many regarding the traditional beliefs also contributed to the new thinking. Scientists like Galileo, Copernicus and Newton and thinkers like Rousseau and J.S. Mill ushered in total change in attitudes and thinking. The general peace which prevailed in the continent from the fall of Napoleon till the first world war saw the growth of a large number of universities all over the continent. The advancement in education had some setback because of the two wars and the consequent economic dislocation. In preparation of war efforts, education was exploited in Germany and Italy, to serve the designs of the rulers, but the general effect of both the wars was to stimulate a yearning for social improvement for educational reforms. Primarily, there was a desire for more equality in educational opportunity

and for an education more appropriate to the interests and abilities of individual pupils. The rise of the working class subsequent to the unprecedented industrial revolution cut through class barriers in the educational field. The aspirations of the masses to acquire education led to a more democratic attitude towards the organisation of schools. The traditional British and European systems of elementary schools for the masses and secondary schools for only a limited number of fee payers, became outmoded. The pattern emerging in the sixties was one in which both primary and secondary education was made available to all - a concept which owes much to the growth of the concept of egalitarian society. Its adoption was further stimulated by the spread of industrialisation, which not only created a demand for better educated workers but also resulted in improved standard of living and in the increasing number of enlightened parents desiring better education for their children.

The democratic values and insistence on personal freedom have liberated education from its bondage and its narrow confines. The nations no longer think of hierarchies, but of people who are both 'different' and complementary, rather than classified into horizontal strata. But this should be

more strongly reinforced in the utilitarian conclusions where it is recognised that for reasons of social justice and human considerations, the opportunities that industrialisation has multiplied must be made available to the released children of the formerly work bound and caste bound classes. The education is now elevated from the plane of private luxuries and class embellishments to the level of a universal necessity. The meaning of the very word 'education' can no longer be taken for granted, any more than the old-fashioned hierarchies of social position.

Keeping in view the development of education, certain questions can be raised. What does equality of educational opportunity mean? What kind of educational opportunities should be provided to achieve the cherished goal of equality for all? What is their relevance to the needs of the modern society based on democratic values? What should be the manner in which these educational opportunities can best be provided? These questions are further discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.200 Equality of Educational Opportunity :

The ideas of equality are derived from the democratic postulates. Morally, they grow out of a belief in the worth and dignity of an individual and economically, from the tenet that the human culture belongs to all. Politically, equality arises from the faith that people can and should rule themselves. Psychologically, it is inherent in the assurance that the human mind can be trusted and should be set free.

The idea of equality on the educational scene, appeared as an effect of Industrial Revolution and was rooted in the belief of universal educability of human beings-a belief which grew out of the needs of giving a technological knowledge to uneducated workers, who were in the shackles of illiteracy for centuries together.

The origin of the inequalities of educational opportunity lies partly in the economic system-private ownership of the means of production and the wage structure - and partly in the social organisation - the individual family unit as the centre for child rearing.

The first stage in the evolution of the concept of

equality of educational opportunity was the notion that all children must be exposed to the same curriculum in the same school. A second stage in the evolution of the concept assumed that different children would have different occupational future and that equality of educational opportunity required providing of different curricula for each type of student. It is possible to conceive of educational opportunity in two different contexts - Individual and Social. From the point of view of the individual, equality of educational opportunity can be conceived -

- i) as a starting point
- ii) as a treatment
- iii) as a final goal
- iv) or as a combination of these three.

Equality can be thought of as a starting point where all individuals start their educational career on an equal footing. From the genetic point of view they evidently do not, but theoretically it can be said as a state of affairs when all children are given exactly the same living conditions from the day of their birth. The difficulty is that they emanate from parents differently equipped genetically and therefore from the outset they are subjected to different treatment.

Equality can also be thought of as applied to treatment. Everybody, irrespective of his genetic background and social origin could be treated equally in various ways. In the first place, everybody could be equal before law. Thereafter a unitary system of preschool or regular school education could take care of all the children alike.

Finally, equality of educational opportunity could be regarded as a goal or a set of guide posts in the sense that training and implementation of educational policy should introduce measures that will contribute to an increased equalisation in educational participation and even more so in educational achievement. This in turn would lead to a greater socio-economic equalisation in terms of economic status, and participation in decision-making processes that concern all the citizens.

The system built on equality of opportunity implies ultimate inequalities of provision as well as inequalities in capacity to utilise diverse facilities. Equality of opportunity implies comparison and it tends to be applicable only in the context of a competition where a number of people are competing for the same goal in accordance with established rules, which can be assessed as being equal or unequal

(Lucas, 1975) of all the three, equality as a goal is considered to be the most essential by Coleman (1966). Coleman raised the question whether equality means equal schools (i.e. equal treatment) or equal students. "What matters ultimately to the student is not how equal his school is but rather whether he is equipped at the end of the school to compete on equal footing with others whatever may be his social origins. Schools are successful in so far as they reduce the dependence of a child's opportunities upon his social origins. Thus equality of educational opportunity implies not merely equal schools but equally effective schools, whose influences will overcome the differences in the starting point of children from different social groups" (Coleman, 1966).

It, therefore, follows that from the point of view of the individual, equality should be pursued from all the three angles i.e. as a starting point, as a treatment, and as a goal to which approximations should continuously be made.

From the social point of view, equality of educational opportunity means that 'a representative individual of any racial or regional group has the same probability of succeeding as a representative individual of any other racial

or regional group'. To arrive at this conclusion, the concept of equality of educational opportunity has passed through at least four stages viz., Equal access, Equal inputs, Equal output and simultaneous social action.

Equal Access : Equal access means, every one irrespective of his sex, colour, race, religion, caste, class, place of residence or social origin is to have equal access to education as everyone has equal right to get education. In practice, equal access implies provision of universal, free and compulsory education upto a given level - elementary or high school which provide the principal entry point into the labour force.

Equal Inputs : Equality here is defined as equality in those elements which are instrumental in learning. Each individual is to receive equal share of school resources irrespective of his ability; all schooling^{is} to be of a standardised form. Schools are to be equal in terms of the facilities, they offer to the students coming from different socio-economic backgrounds and having different abilities. The operational meaning of this concept is that all the school systems, whether for poor or rich, for Negro or white,

so called upper caste or lower caste, should have equal educational facilities. This concept of equality of educational opportunity is very relevant for most countries where it is a common experience to find schools for the poor having substandard building, poor equipment and inadequate facilities. The International Commission (Edgar et al, 1972), on Education has remarked: "Education systems are not able to eliminate the facts of inequality; but at least, they should not make them worse. Whatever power education has or has not to alleviate in its own domain, inequalities among individuals and groups, a resolute social policy to correct unfair distribution of educational resources and effort is the obvious precondition for any progress in this respect."

However, pupil achievement is not entirely a function of school inputs as measured by certain tangible characteristics of schools. More would depend upon the quality of school inputs which are put to use.

Equal Output : The first two concepts of equality of educational opportunity are focused on the equalisation of educational inputs i.e. the means of education. The third concept of equality of educational opportunity is concerned

with the end product of education i.e. educational achievement, equality in which should be the chief criteria of judging the effectiveness of schools with equal inputs. While equality at the input side can be waived by providing extra resources to the educationally deprived, we must insist on equal outcomes for different social groups at the end of a school stage. (Coleman, 1966).

In fact, the ends of social justice may demand unequal treatment in favour of socially disadvantaged groups in order to ensure equality of results.

The British Plowden Committee's recommendation is on the same lines. It recommended to designate those schools in England as 'Educational Priority Areas' which are attended largely by educationally deprived children and to give extra help to them in terms of better paid and more experienced teachers, a lower pupil teacher ratio, more specialists' help, better nutrition and health services, better equipment and instructional materials and so on. The already accepted principle that special need calls for special help should be given a new cutting edge. We ask for positive discrimination in favour of such schools and

the children in them, going well beyond an attempt to equalise resources. Schools in deprived areas should be given priority in many respects. The justification is that the homes and neighbourhoods from which many of their children come provide little support and stimulus for learning. The schools must supply a compensating environment (Plowden Report, 1967).

Equality of educational opportunity, does not imply identity of treatment of educational opportunity. It means that every child should be given optimal opportunity to develop his personal assets as they are, at the time educational treatment in a public school begins. One should provide, "equal opportunity for unequal treatment so far as socially relevant differences are concerned" so that towards the end, educational outcomes are the same for every social group.

Simultaneous Social Action :

The disparity found in the achievement of children from different school systems is largely determined by highly complex socio-economic processes and not so much by educational policies. So, the home environment of the children

need drastic changes. Universal enrolment quotas, expansion of ancillary services and measures of student support are mere palliatives unless backed by a determined policy of cultural promotion based on economic and social democracy. Determined move by the society to change old values and prejudices alone would make positive contribution towards the attainment of equality.

A. Assessment of Equality of Educational Opportunity :

There are various ways to assess equality of educational opportunity. Some of them are discussed here.

Coleman et al (1966) put forward five ways to assess equality of educational opportunity. Firstly, in terms of racial segregation, that is, whether the children coming from different racial backgrounds attend the same schools. Secondly, the resource inputs, like physical facilities and library facilities etc. in various school systems. Third is in terms of intangible resources like teacher morale. Fourth way is to assess equality of inputs as weighted according to their effectiveness for achievement; and fifth is the equality of output as prima facie evidence of equality of educational opportunity. The role of the schools is to make

achievement independent of background and to cover some of the differences in the starting point of children from different social groups (Coleman, 1966).

Rawls (1961) argued that since "natural" advantages are as arbitrary as the social ones, since their development and fruition is at the mercy of social conditions, opportunity cannot therefore be equalized but can only be bent towards equality of result. And equality of result can be attained by "difference principle" in the distribution of goods.

The difference principle states that if some persons are better off, the lesser advantaged are also to be made better off and even more so. This implies that inequalities of birth and natural endowment are undeserved so they are to be somehow compensated.

Stodolsky and Lesser (1967) said that one way of assessing the equality of educational opportunity involves the removal of the burdens of poor teaching, negative teacher attitudes, and inadequate educational resources of minority group children.

B. Equality of Educational Opportunity in India: Education has always been heralded as a harbinger of equality all over

the world. It has also been accepted by all the developing countries as an indispensable vehicle to bring in horizontal as well as vertical assimilation of various strata of the society. Nowhere this assumption can be truer than in a country like India with its complex stratification of the society based on traditional caste system and also class differences. In order to achieve the uphill task of bridging this big gulf and also to give rise to the growth of liberal thinking and total emancipation in the society, the role of education cannot be overemphasised.

After its emergence as a free, democratic, socialistic republic, thirty years ago, India was faced with serious problems. There were poverty, illiteracy and ignorance everywhere. Education was therefore considered to be one and the only instrument of national development. (Education Commission, 1964-66). Educational opportunity on a wide scale was, therefore, urgently needed to accomplish the following broad purposes:

1. To develop knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for gainful employment in tasks of economic development.
2. To raise the low standard of living of the Indian people by increasing productivity.

3. To meet the challenges posed by the second industrial revolution of automation and cybernetics.
4. To strengthen the foundations of the Indian democracy by creating an educated electorate and dedicated leadership.
5. To alter the present hierarchical, stratified and in-egalitarian society into a truly democratic one based on principles of freedom, equality, social justice and fraternity.
6. To achieve social and national integration by fostering a feeling of oneness among all religions, cultures and regions.
7. To provide fullest opportunities to the individual to develop himself as an end, and not as a mere means of social development.

Keeping in view the importance of education for national reconstruction and strengthening of democracy, in the post Independence era, the country has made giant strides in the provision of educational facilities at all levels, especially in the primary level where only 33% children in the age-group 6-11 and 9% children in the age group 11-14 were attending schools in 1947, in 1973-74, the enrolment percentages for

the 6-11 and 11-14 age groups rose to 86% and 36% respectively (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, (1976). In absolute terms, 64 million children in the age group 6-11 and 15 million children in the age group 11-14 were attending school. The expenditure on primary education likewise increased from Rs.25 crore in 1950-51 to Rs.300 crores in 1973-74, and the literacy percentage for the primary school age children rose to 50 percent. The government has given top priority to the universalisation of primary education within a very short time and 100 per cent adult literacy within a period of ten years. Uptil now, primary education has received only 32 percent of the allocations in the total educational plan outlay, and at least 50 percent should now be set aside for primary education. (Union Education Minister, 1977).

Secondary Education Commission (1964-66) has said that the equality of opportunity to all sections of the population is the only guarantee for the building up of an egalitarian and human society in which the exploitation of the weak will be minimised.

In a caste and class-ridden society like India, there are inequalities arising in various ways :

1. In places where no primary, secondary or collegiate institutions exist, children do not have the same opportunity as those who have these facilities in the neighbourhood.
2. Another cause of inequality is the poverty of a large section of the population and the relative affluence of a small minority.
3. Differences in the standards of schools and colleges create an intractable form of educational inequality.
4. Differences in home environment. A child from a rural household or an urban slum having illiterate parents, does not have same opportunity which a child from an upper class home with highly educated parents has.
5. Wide disparity between the education of girls and boys.
6. Disparity of educational development between the advanced classes and the backward ones.

Whether from the point of view of democracy, socialism, national integration, economic development, or cultural renaissance, two major educational policies stand out fully:

- (i) provision of equality of educational opportunity, and
- (ii) the cultivation of excellence (Naik, 1975).

The problem of provision of equality of educational opportunity has different connotations at different stages.

Where the goal is to provide free and compulsory education for all, there is no question of any selection. There is also no difficult question of differentiation in curricula because all children have to be put through an essentially common programme of education. This programme needs modification with a view to making a conscious effort to secure equality of educational opportunity.

The objective of policy of providing equality of educational opportunity is to democratise education. In order to obtain the best results, it is necessary to supplement it with another, namely, the pursuit of excellence. This policy has several important aspects :

1. To identify talents and to provide it with suitable opportunities to realise its potential for full development.

2. Placement in a good educational institution where the talented child will be brought in contact with good teachers and will live and study under good conditions.

3. Provision of scholarship to enable the child to overcome the financial handicaps it suffers from.

C. Essential Attributes of Educational Opportunity :

Simply stated, educational opportunity means provision of educational facilities in schools and colleges and supply of those goods and services which will enable students to attend educational institutions. Since the resources of any country are at best limited, educational opportunity too cannot be available to all, especially at higher stages. In these circumstances, educational opportunity should not be construed to mean extended provision for all but only equal access or equal chances of availing of it after satisfying some criterion of ability or social justice or both. Besides equal access, equality should also extend to the share of resources, facilities or services offered to different groups of children. Again, educational opportunity should not only be adequate or equal, but it should also be of a good quality so that it can fulfil the basic purposes underlying its provision. Thus, educational opportunity to be effective, should fulfil three minimum conditions viz., adequacy, equal accessibility and treatment, (however, we may define it) and quality. The educational systems in India

have geared, right from the beginning to the pursuit of these three major goals of quantity, equality, and quality (Naik, 1975). However, it is extremely difficult to keep a balance between the conflicting demands of all the three. Whereas an extension of the limited educational resources to all or a much higher number may lead to a dilution of resources, the achievement of uniform educational standards may result into inappropriate standards for the talented and the retarded. In this way the pursuit of quantity or quality may lead to a substandard education both in its tangible and semi-tangible aspects. Of the three essential attributes of educational opportunity, equality is the master concept and subsumes in itself the other two viz., quantity and quality. Equality of educational opportunity to be effective should be both adequate as well as of a good quality. This has become one of the key words in the policy debate on educational problems both at the national and the international levels (Husen, 1972). It is particularly a guiding force in democratic countries, although communist countries also acknowledge full allegiance to it. However, its applications are different in different political systems. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the need and significance of equality of educational opportunity in a democratic country.

D. Need And Significance of Equality of Educational

Opportunity : Educational programmes for the poor have two distinct sets of objectives: the first set being strictly educational, for example, the raising of educational performance levels, and the second set, being vaguer social objectives, for example, 'breaking the poverty cycle', and so on. Both types of objectives imply some theory or assumption about the ways in which such objectives could be reached. To set meaningful objectives at an educational level clearly entails some understanding of the changes necessary to attain these goals. At the more general level the educational objectives themselves become the means to achieve wider social goals, and this suggests a relationship between improved educational standards and subsequent occupational position. Clearly, the importance attached to such aims as 'equalising educational opportunity' derived in part from the belief that greater equality of educational opportunity will itself contribute to the achievement of wider social and economic opportunity.

Guthrie et al (1971) put forward a conceptual link between pupil's socio-economic status, school services available, his achievement and his post school performance.

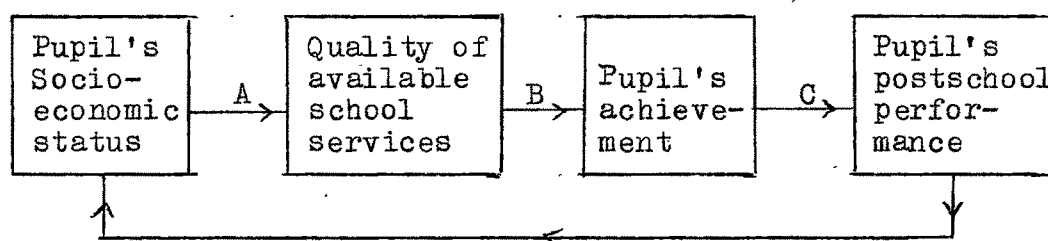


Figure 1.1 Shows The Conceptual Link

Figure 1.1 shows that (A) the quality of school services provided to a pupil is related to his socioeconomic status, and that relationship is such that lower-quality school services are associated with a pupil's being from a lower socio-economic stratum.

(B) A relationship exists between the quality of school services provided to pupil and his academic achievement and that relationship is such that higher quality school services are associated with higher levels of achievement.

(C) The post school opportunities of a pupil are related to his achievement in school, and that relationship is such that higher achievement is associated with "success" and lower achievement is associated with lack of "success".

From the economical point of view, Warner's index of status characteristics (ISC) found six items to provide the highest correlation. They are (1) occupation (2) amount of

income, (3) source of income, (4) house type, (5) dwelling area, and, (6) education (Warner et al, 1949).

Svensson (1962) said that education is singled out as an important factor of production. Economic growth is generated not only by real capital in the form of tools and machinery, but also by men. And just as technological improvements increase the efficiency of machinery, so education increases the efficiency of manpower. The same author said that, one thing that can be said with some confidence to those who fear the effect of quantitative expansion on quality is that there is certainly a much larger 'reservoir of ability' that has to be tapped. And for this quality, educational system is desired.

Realising the need and importance of equality of educational opportunity in India, lot of attention was paid to education by the leaders. The relevance of education to the basic needs of the country was also wisely discussed and argued about. All were equivocal in their demand that universal and compulsory education should be given to all the citizens. The political consciousness which was whipped up by the mass uprising against the foreign rulers made it quite clear to the intellectuals that by stressing on education

alone, they will be able to bring in social revolution in the tradition bound country sides. The emergence of Independence therefore saw that all the leaders were totally committed to the propogation of education to all.

These hopes and expectations of the masses were eventually embodied in the Directive Principles of the Indian constitution. Through these Directives on education the constitution makers sought to reflect the inherent desire for social justice and emancipation of the people. In order to liberate the masses from the shackles of inequality, emphasis was laid on equal opportunity of education. It therefore restored the basic respect for human values and sought to allow an individual to bloom fully in commensurate to his talent and capacity. The state patronage of education saw the growth in number of schools (public schools) and also in the rise of mass literacy. However, the private enterprise in education also received a shot in the arm and there was large scale of development in the rise of private schools also. The educational scene as it stands today has within its broad canvass, both these two systems of schools (private and public), allowing the parents to make their own choice in selecting schools for their children.

1.300 Dual System of Schools :

The school systems as they are today, can be divided into two groups-private and public.

There are two elements of critical importance, which lead to the dual system of schools. Firstly, the family undertook the responsibility for its members' welfare from cradle to the grave. It was a welfare society, with each extended family serving as a welfare organisation for its own members. Secondly, the family as a unit of economic production produced an appropriate context in which the child could learn the things he **needed** to know. In this context the equality of educational opportunity had no relevance.

With the industrial revolution, the changes occurred in family's function. Children began to be occupationally mobile outside their families. It was in the early 19th century that public education began to appear in Europe and America. Before that time private education had grown with the expansion of the mercantile class. This class had both the need and resources to have the children educated outside the home, either for professional occupations or for occupations in the developing world of commerce.

The emergence of the public, tax supported education was not solely a function of the stage of industrial development. It was also a function of the class structure in the society. In England the 'voluntary schools' run and organised by churches with some instances of state support, were not supplemented by a state supported system until the Education Act of 1870. In the United States, the public schools quickly became the common schools, attended by representatives of all classes, these schools provided a common educational experience for most American children excluding only the upper-class children in private schools, and the poor and Southern Negroes who went to no schools. In England, however the class system continued to exist and directly manifested itself through the schools. The state supported, or 'board schools', became the schools of the labouring lower classes with a sharply different curriculum from those voluntary schools which served the middle and upper classes. The difference was so sharp that two government departments, the Education Department and the Science and Art Department, administered external examinations - the first for the products of the board schools and the latter for the products of the voluntary schools as they progressed into secondary education. The idea of differential educational opportunity,

implicit in the Education Act of 1870 in England, seems to derive from dual needs - the needs arising from industrialization for a basic education for the labour force, and the interests of parents in having one's own child receive a good education. The middle classes could meet both these needs by providing a free system for the children of labouring classes, and a tuition system which soon came to be supplemented by state grants for their own. The long survival of this differential system depended not only on the historical fact that the voluntary schools existed before a public system came into existence but also on the fact that allows both of these ends to be met: the community's collective need for a trained labour force and the middle class individual's interest in a better education for his own child. It served a third need as well, that of maintaining the existing social order - a system of stratification that was step removed from a feudal system, but designed to prevent a wholesale challenge by the children of the working class to the positions held for children of the middle classes.

The educational scene at the opening of the 19th century Indian society was hierarchical, stratified and

inegalitarian. This in simple terms means that there were class and caste differences in the society. In this system, it was the social status that determined an individual's access to education and the objective of the system was not to promote vertical mobility but to educate individuals to their pre-determined status in the society. The modern educational system of India was meant to be an improvement over the traditional system of education. The Indian leaders brought the idea of equality of educational opportunity as an instrument of social change and this became the integral part of the nationalist thought. With the intention of providing equal educational facilities to all the school-going children of free and democratic India, the schools were started by government, where fee was abolished. Thus, the public system of education came into existence. The privately organised system of schools has been in existence ever since the missionaries started their schools in 17th century. At present the schools are maintained by government/local authorities (public schools) and by voluntary organisations (private schools).

1.400 The Scheme of Chapterisation :

The reporting of the present work has been divided into six chapters.

The first chapter is devoted to the general introduction of the problem, historical perspective, the concept of equality of educational opportunity, and dual system of schools.

The second chapter consists of the review of related literature. An attempt is made there to note the trends, to identify the gaps and thereby to select the problem.

The third chapter deals with the statement of the problem, enumeration of the objectives and hypotheses, specification of the variables chosen, plan of the problem, sample, description of the tools used, data collection, scoring procedure, and statistical techniques.

The obtained results are shown and are interpreted in the fourth chapter.

The fifth chapter deals with the discussion of the results and the remedial measures.

The Sixth chapter gives the summary of the work, the obtained results, and some suggestions for further research.