

Title: Revamping Indian Education System: Setting a Democratic, Accessible and Equitable Model for Developing Countries

Theme: Formal Education
Sub-theme: Revamping Teacher Education

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MODERN INDIAN EDUCATION: A HISTORICAL JOURNEY

Today, the education system in India mainly comprises of primary education (classes I-V), upper primary (middle school) education (classes VI-VIII), secondary education (classes IX-X), senior secondary education (classes XI-XII) and, thereafter, higher education. In other words, elementary education consists of eight years of schooling (classes I-VIII). Each of secondary and senior secondary education consists of two years of schooling. Higher education starts after passing the higher secondary education, also called intermediate education. Depending upon the stream (general, medical, engineering, legal, etc), doing graduation takes three to five years. Post-graduate courses are generally of two to three years duration. After completing post-graduation, scope for doing research in various educational institutes remains open. For medium of instruction, three language formula is followed during 5+3+2 years of schooling.

The origin of the present system of education in India can be traced to the beginning of the nineteenth century when a controversy raged over the issue -- whether oriental learning and science should be spread through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian, or Western sciences and literature be spread through English as the medium of instruction? Lord Macaulay was a central figure in this language debate. Though both the groups -- the Orientalists and the Anglicists -- stuck to their respective stands, neither of these groups wanted to suppress the local vernaculars, mother tongues of the people. In other words, both the groups agreed that education would be conducted in the vernacular during the initial years of education. Macaulay's Minute, 1835 did finally pave the way for the continuance of schools and colleges where indigenous learning was being imparted and also for promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India. That marked the real beginning of bilingualism in educational system of India. Subsequently, Despatch of the Court of Directors of the East India Company popularly known as Wood's Education Despatch of July 19, 1854 formed the basis for creating a system of education, from the primary school to the University. Since then serious efforts were made by the Government to promote education at all levels.

Nevertheless, it was not a simple and smooth journey for the government of India to establish and evolve a system that could satisfy every section of the society. Dissatisfaction of the people started surfacing as and when the outcomes of educational and development measures undertaken by the government did not seem to match their aspirations and expectations. As a result, various measures for educational reconstruction followed, time and again, in the form of institution of commissions and committees for examining/reviewing/reforming the existing system, and initiation of new policies, programmes, etc vis-a-vis the changing needs, problems and challenges of different sections of the society and the country as a whole. Some landmark developments in the history of modern Indian education during the pre-independence period include the following.

- Hunter Commission, officially known as Indian Education Commission (1882)
- Indian Universities Commission (1902)
- Government Resolution on Educational Policy (1913)
- Calcutta University Commission (1917) also called Sadler Commission
- Hartog Committee (1929)
- Sapru Committee (1934)
- Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37)
- Zakir Hussain Committee (1937)

- Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (1939) also called B. G. Kher Committee
- Central Advisory Board of Education Report (1944) or Post-War Educational Development Report, popularly called the Sargent Report (1944).

While some of these reports covered entire system of education, some others focused on its selected sectors or levels. Similarly, the Government of independent India, in pursuance of the constitutional mandate, has also initiated several measures for social and economic reconstruction of the country. As a result, measures for educational reconstruction had inevitably followed. Various commissions and committees were appointed at different times to survey, study, review and recommend improvements in the existing system, policies and programmes of education. Reserving the net effect of all these for later sections of this paper, it is appropriate here to recall the chronology of some landmark commissions, committees, policies, programmes and frameworks.

- University Education Commission (1948-49) popularly called Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission
- Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) popularly called Dr. Mudaliar Commission
- Committee on Higher Education for Rural Areas, Rural Institutions (1954) -- Shri K. L. Shrimali Committee
- National Committee on Women's Education (1958) -- Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh Committee
- University Grants Commission's Review Committee on Education (1960) -- Prof. K.G. Saiyidain Committee
- U. N. Dhebar Commission (1960)
- Committee on Emotional Integration (1961) -- Dr. Sampurnanand Committee
- Committee on Plan Projects: Study Team for Selected Educational Schemes (1961) – Shri B. N. Jha Committee
- Study Group on the Training of Elementary Teachers in India (1961)
- Kothari Committee on Model Act for Universities (1961)
- University Grants Commission's Committee on Education as an Elective Subject at the Undergraduate Stage (1963) -- Mr. A. R. Wadia Committee
- Study Group on the Study of English in India (1964) – Prof. Gokak Committee
- Education Commission (1964-66), popularly called Dr. D. S. Kothari Commission
- Committee of Members of Parliament on Education (1967)
- Three Delegations by University Grants Commission (1967-1971)
- Steering Committee of Planning Group on Education (1968)
- National Policy on Education (1968)
- Review Committee on the Working of National Council of Educational Research and Training (1968) -- Dr. Nag Chaudhuri Committee
- Study Group on the Development of Pre-school Child (1970) – Shrimati Mina Swaminathan Committee
- Gajendragadkar Committee on Governance of Universities and Colleges (1971)
- National Committee on 10+2+3 Educational Structure (1972) -- Dr. Shukla Committee
- Committee on Secondary Teacher Education of NCTE (1973-77) -- Dr. Jha Committee
- Committee on Elementary Teacher Education of NCTE (1975) -- Dr. Malcolm S. Adishesaiah Committee
- University Grants Commission's Panel on Teacher Education During Fifth Plan Period (1974)
- The Curriculum for Ten-Year School: A Framework (1975)
- Standing Committee of National Council for Teacher Education (1975-76)
- Review Committee on the Curriculum for Ten-Year School (1977) -- Shri Ishwarbhai Patel Committee
- Working Group on Vocationalisation of Education (1977-78) -- Dr. Malcolm S. Adishesaiah Committee
- Draft National Policy on Education (1979)
- Study Group on INSAT Television Utilisation for Education and Development (1980) -- Shri S. Sathyam Committee
- National Commissions on Teachers – I & II: The Teacher and Society (1983-85) – Prof. Chattopadhyaya Commission
- Working Group to Review Teachers' Training Programme (In the Light of the Need for Value-Oriented) (1983)
- Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective (1985)
- National Curriculum for Primary and Secondary Education: A Framework (1985)
- National Policy on Education (1986)

- National Policy on Education: Programme of Action (1986)
- National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education – A Framework (1988)
- National Curriculum for Teacher Education: A Framework (1988)
- Committee for Review of NPE 1986: Towards an Enlightened and Humane Society (1990) -- Acharya Ramamurthy Committee
- University Grants Commission's Report of the Curriculum Development Centre in Education (1990)
- NCTE Committee for Teacher Education Programme Through Distance Education Mode (1990)
- Central Advisory Board of Education Committee on Distance Education (1992)
- CABE Committee on Policy, 1992
- National Policy on Education 1986: Programme of Action 1992
- National Advisory Committee: Learning Without Burden (1992)
- The National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993
- Group to Examine the Feasibility of Implementation of the Recommendations of the National Advisory Committee (1993) -- Prof. Yashpal Committee
- Committee on B.Ed. Correspondence (1993) -- Prof. Ramlal Parikh Committee
- University Grants Commission's Committee on B.Ed. Correspondence, Distance Education Programme (1994)
- Special Orientation Programme for School Teachers (SOPT) (1994-97)
- Committee of National Council for Teacher Education on Different Modes of Education Used for Teacher Preparation in India (1995)
- University Grants Commission's Committee on B.Ed. Through Correspondence for In-service Teachers (1995) -- Prof. Takwale Committee
- Planning Commission's Report on Teacher Education in Five Year Plans (1951-97)
- NCTE Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education (1998)
- National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2000)
- National Curriculum Framework (2005)
- Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2006)
- National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009)
- Panel to Review the functioning of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) (2008), later rechristened as The Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education (2009) -- Prof. Yashpal Committee
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009

The latest commission is the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) 2006-09, which is popularly called Sir Sam Pitroda Commission. Here, it is important to note that the NKC, a high-level advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, was set up with the objective of transforming India into a knowledge society. In its endeavour to transform the knowledge landscape of the country, the NKC had reportedly submitted around 300 recommendations on 27 focus areas during its three and a half year term (<http://www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/>). While the term of the NKC had come to an end, the implementation of NKC's recommendations is currently underway at the Central and State levels. The report with so many recommendations itself speaks volumes about the need for revamping the entire education system in India. The Report of NKC read with the latest Yashpal Committee Report is likely to renovate, revamp and rejuvenate the existing system. A National Commission for Higher Education and Research is expected to subsume as many as 13 existing professional councils and regulatory agencies including the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). It is in this context, this paper attempts to moot a strong and clear proposal for consideration while revamping, renovating and rejuvenating Indian education system with reference to school education in general and teacher education in particular.

REVAMPING THE EXISTING SCHOOL AND TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

In spite of above mentioned measures, the challenge of providing democratic, accessible and equitable education at each level continues and calls for drastic or dramatic changes/improvements in terms of access, equity, infrastructure, preparation, motivation and deployment of teachers, and provision of quality textbooks, among others. Therefore, the proposal mooted here encompasses these aspects and attempt at the following.

- i) To set an agenda for revamping the existing education system with a view to provide for an effective inclusive education in India;

- ii) To propose a democratic, accessible, equitable and sustainable model of school and teacher education in the form of action agenda touching upon the following.
- State's role and responsibility in providing for accessible and uniform-quality institutions and curriculum,
 - Teacher-staff empowerment with full freedom and accountability for universal enrollment and retention of learners, and
 - Wholesome-community thrust, action and responsibility for ensuring due response of the State and the educational system to befittingly address the felt, visible and perceptible common needs, problems and issues of learners and their parent-communities as a whole.

Agenda for Revamping the System to Provide for An Effective Inclusive Education

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) places the highest priority on education as a central instrument for achieving rapid and inclusive growth and aims at strengthening the education sector covering all segments of the education pyramid. In its emphasis on Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE), it is guided by the following five parameters: i) Universal Access, ii) Universal Enrolment, iii) Universal Retention, iv) Universal Achievement, and v) Equity. In this context, it is essential to note that the State interventions to promote effective inclusive education cannot succeed without its willingness, determination and commitment to the cause and without ensuring people's participation.

An account on "Caste and literacy – Education of the Dalits" as quoted in Singh (2008, pp.216-217) deserves a mention here to understand and feel the extent of inclusion/exclusion taking place in development.

"The factual position on untouchability came out in a Report based on a survey of 565 villages in 11 States by a group called Aman Biradari. The convener of the group, Harsh Mande, whose other associates are: Ghanshyam Shah, Sukhdeo Thorat, Satish Deshpande and Amita Baviskar, reported a brief summary of their findings in the Hindustan Times on August 15, 2006."

"Children in the rural areas learn early the rules of the caste, even as their country races into the 21st century. It was found that 38 per cent of the Dalit children in government schools are made to sit separately. 20 per cent of the Dalit children are not allowed to drink water from the same source as others. A shocking 27 per cent Dalits are prevented from entering Police Stations and 28.7 per cent are prevented from ration shops, 33 per cent health and social workers refuse to go to Dalit homes and 23.5 per cent do not get their letters delivered at their residence. Segregated sitting for Dalits was found in 29.5 per cent Panchayats. And, in 14.4 per cent villages they were not allowed even entrance to a Panchayat building".

"Dalit settlements are more often found segregated from the main village. Such traditions are repeated even by government departments, just as in Indira Awaas Vikas Yojana. NGOs too do not lag behind in this practice. In the post-earthquake (2001) rehabilitation programme in Gujarat, the NGOs followed the government norms, i.e. segregation of the Dalits from non-Dalits".

The study concludes on a rather highly disappointing note: "With untouchability thus persisting unashamedly in state institutions like schools and police stations, in public spaces like temples and shops, in farms and markets, and in homes and hearts, the Dalit still lives in India waiting hopelessly and sometimes in anger for the long-betrayed dawn of equality."

This moving account speaks volumes about the need for inclusive development through inclusive education and vice-versa. Thus, despite being charged with a constitutional mandate to promote social justice, various local institutions of the Indian State have still a long way to ameliorate the situation. It is needless to emphasise that untouchability has a direct bearing on one's literacy and education. The conclusion in such a situation is rather obvious -- access to and equity in education remains a dream for the excluded -- let alone the education of the children with disabilities. Here, it is relevant to look at some hard facts on educational situation as well.

Some Glaring Facts on Education

According to 7th All India Education Survey 2002 (<http://smilefoundationindia.org/ourchildren.htm>) some facts on educational situation in India are as follows.

- Only 53% of habitation has a primary school. One out of every 40 primary schools is conducted in open spaces or tents. On an average, there are less than three teachers per primary school. In nearly 60% of schools, there are less than two teachers to teach classes I to V and they have to manage classes from I to V every day.
- On an average an upper primary school is 3 km away in 22% of areas under habitations.
- Only 20% of habitation has a secondary school.
- Less than half of children aged 6-14 and 50% of children aged 6-18 do not go to school. Or, at least 35 million children aged 6-14 years do not attend school.
- A little over one-third of all children who enroll in grade one reach grade eight.
- 53% of girls aged 5-9 years are illiterate.
- High cost of private education, need to work to support their families and little interest in studies are the reasons given by 3 in every four drop-outs as the reason for their dropping out.
- Dropout rates increase alarmingly in class III to V, its 50% for boys, 58% for girls.
- More than 50 per cent of girls fail to enroll in school; those that do are likely to drop out by the age of 12.

An analysis of data available at www.indiastat.com revealed some educational statistics as follows.

Gross enrollment ratios (GERs)

- In 2006-07, the gross enrolment ratio was 111.4 (114.6 for boys and 108 for girls) in primary classes (I-V), 73.8 (77.6 for boys and 69.6 for girls) in middle classes (VI-VIII), and 97.1 (100.4 for boys and 93.5 for girls) in primary and middle classes (I-VIII) taken together.
- In 2001-02, the gross enrolment ratio at high/higher secondary level (IX-XII) was 33.9 (39 for males and 28.4 for females).
- In 2005-06, the gross enrolment ratio in higher education was 11.6 (13.63 for males and 9.37 for females).

Number of teachers and teacher-pupil ratio

- In 2006-07, the number of teachers was 2,323,000 (1,403,000 males and 920,000 females) in primary schools and 2,248,000 (1,388,000 males and 860,000 females) in high/higher secondary schools (includes intermediate and pre-university-old pattern).
- In 2005-06, the number of teachers in higher education (Degree level and above) was 488,003.
- In 2006-07, average teacher-pupil ratio was 34 in primary schools, 33 in high/higher secondary schools, and 26 in higher education institutions.

Dropout rates (in 2006-07)

- 25.60% (24.57% for boys and 26.75% for girls) at primary level (classes I-V).
- 45.90% (46.44% for boys and 45.22% for girls) at elementary level (classes I-VIII).
- 59.88% (58.61% for boys and 61.50 for girls) at secondary level (classes I-X).
- 35.91%, at primary level, 53.05% at the elementary level and 70.57% at the secondary level, in the case of Scheduled Caste students.
- 33.09% at primary level, 62.54% at the elementary level and 78.07% at the secondary level, in the case of Scheduled Tribe students.

Doctorate Degrees awarded and Central Universities' teacher positions lying vacant

- The number of Doctorate Degrees awarded in 1982-83 was 6,948, while it rose to 17,898 in 2004-05. The total number of Ph.Ds awarded between 1998-99 and 2004-05 was 170,551.
- Out of 2,469 sanctioned posts of Professors 1,102 posts (44.63%) are vacant, while at Readers level, 2,312 posts (51.31%) out of sanctioned posts of 4,506 are vacant, and at Lecturers level 5,101 posts (53.11%) out of sanctioned posts of 16,579 are lying vacant in Central Universities in 2007-08 (as on 15-12-2008).

Based on The Times of India report (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/RTE-bane-12L-teacher-vacancies/articleshow/5378> -- Retrieved on 8/6/2010), the teacher education capacity and teachers' position in India is as follows.

- The highest stumbling block which might come in the way of the success of the Right to Education Act

could be 7.72 lakh (i.e. 772,000) untrained teachers and vacancy of 12.06 lakh (i.e.1,200,000) teachers across the country.

- Categorising States into three groups, MHRD said 13 states have adequate teacher education capacity, seven north-eastern states have high percentage of untrained teachers and modest teacher education capacity. The worst off are eight states which have a high number of untrained teachers and inadequate teacher education capacity.
- Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand are the states with very low level of untrained teachers. These states put together need 2.33 lakh (i.e. 233,000) new teachers and have to train 94,000 in-service teachers. Karnataka has the distinction of having no untrained teachers, while Delhi, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have less than 1% untrained teachers.
- In the second group are the north-eastern states of Arunachal, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. While the vacancy in these seven states is a mere 3,161 teachers, they need to train 72,000 teachers.
- The real problem however is in Bihar, Assam, Chattisgarh, J&K, Jharkhand, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. While in Assam 55% are untrained, Bihar has more than 45% and West Bengal 32.15% untrained teachers. Together, these states have 6.06 lakh (i.e. 660,000) untrained teachers and vacancy for 9.73 lakh (i.e. 973,000) new teachers.

Its all really a matter of shame! Is it not the net effect of hitherto initiated landmark commissions, committees, policies, etc mentioned above? Is it not a testimony to the nature and degree of commitment shown and contribution made by the people at the helm of affairs of planning, institution, heading and implementation of these commissions, committees, policies, programmes, frameworks, schemes, etc for more than six decades in independent India? In spite of such state of affairs, why have they not been held individually and collectively responsible for all these (mis)deeds? The answer is obvious and simple: it is not the families of the policy makers and implementers who are in such poor state of affairs, nor are they losers or sufferers at any cost, rather they will only gain in every respect. Reason is clear – many new schemes, programmes, projects means many new positions with immediate better prospects first for them, the indifferent, lethargic, incompetent, sophisticated, white-collared crooks, and the rest is immaterial -- be it cursing others, particularly the target group to hell or leaving every other thing to the air.

SETTING A DEMOCRATIC, ACCESSIBLE, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE MODEL OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER EDUCATION

It is high time that all the policy makers and implementers at all stages, levels and sectors of education must really feel guilty of their individual and collective failures in promoting desired access, infrastructure, teachers and outcome at each level. They all must introspect seriously and empathise fully with the hitherto deprived families and children, and commit themselves to the cause of promoting democratic and equitable education to all of them. They need to commit for such a cause in the same spirit as they wish the things to be done or happen for themselves or their children and homes. Only then, they can and will take prompt and perfect action to ensure universal access, universal enrolment, universal retention, achievement and equity at all levels of education. It is in such a spirit the model proposed here requires a thorough consideration at appropriate levels.

Suggested Model: Action Agenda

The model suggested with suitable action agenda here may sound idealistic for all cynical elements, but it is objective, fair and pragmatic for all those who are capable of treating all children of the country as one group or equal entity and empathise with them that they all deserve equal opportunities such as democratic, accessible and equitable education with uniform standards/quality. Therefore, for this model to become operative and effective, the **State shall** endeavour to:

- Ensure a primary school within one kilometer distance of every habitation, and also ensure proper ratios of primary schools to upper primary (middle) schools, and of these to secondary/high schools within two kilometers distance of the habitations. This should be done on urgent/emergency basis within a period of two-three years by re-channelising all resources at its command.
- Ensure the ratio of number of all inclusive standard quality rooms to the strength of the children

(students) and the staff in all schools – primary to secondary (high) schools -- in all geographical areas, be tribal, rural, semi-urban or urban.

- Prescribe the territorial jurisdiction of every school at each level and in every geographical area and make compulsory the admission of all the children residing in that jurisdictional area/habitation into only that school at that level.
- Take prompt action to amend the order of languages in the present three language formula (by looking at it beyond linguistic, regional and political chauvinism). English should be the first and main medium of instruction in all schools throughout the country, with Hindi as the second language and mother tongue or regional language of a state as the third language (because that can be easily learnt at that late stage also). There can be any other third language of their choice for those children in the Hindi speaking states/areas, whose mother tongue is Hindi.
- Prescribe (revised) common national school curriculum (5+3+2) with common textbooks throughout the country. However, the textbooks related to the third language (regional language/mother tongue) be left to the respective states at that level thus giving equal recognition to regional language or mother tongue of people of every State in India. There should be common dress code (uniform) for all the school children throughout the country.
- Provide uniforms, all textbooks, notebooks, stationery, pens, pencils, compulsory boarding with additional tuition facilities as may be required, etc free of cost up to high school (secondary education) level to all the children whose parents are below poverty line or are belonging to SC/ST.
- Prescribe differential amount of tuition and other fees, cost of uniform, textbooks, etc for children of higher economic strata depending upon their paying capacities at each level of schooling and each year.
- Provide for compulsory admission of every school-age child and readmission of every school dropout into a school in that part of particular state, or if the child/dropout had moved out of that state then into any school in that place (state) at that stage where he/she had dropped out.
- Abolish, as an urgent measure, the position of para-teachers in all schools at all levels, and employ all presently available unemployed B.Ed degree holders (i. e. those trained in English medium only) as teachers in any state in the schools at any level in that state or in any other state needing trained graduates. Others trained in regional language must be considered for teacher positions in that particular State only. This will help in meeting the immediate requirement for trained teachers as well as to match the existing supply with the demand. But, there is need to prevent absenteeism among teachers by enforcing strict measures against the erring teachers and other responsible staff members in the schools.
- Abolish National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) urgently. Treat entire school education from class I to X as one continuum and ensure training of every teacher to make him/her understand the entire curriculum framework and the educational system with its underlying national philosophy, among others, as one integrated entity and to equip him/her to transact it at any and every level/stage of schooling. Prescribe one qualification for teachers in all schools at all the levels. That should be, any graduate with BEd (Comprehensive) Degree as minimum eligible qualification for appointment as teachers in all schools, irrespective of their levels – primary/upper primary (elementary/middle) or secondary (high) schools – in any part of the country. The minimum duration of BEd (Comprehensive) Degree must be two years, either through face-to-face mode or through distance mode.
- Prescribe uniform terms and conditions of service for all the teachers in all public or private schools at all the levels with scope for their transfers across these schools at any level. All future appointments to the teacher vacancies in any school be made with candidates possessing BEd (Comprehensive) degree on the basis of common state-level (or national level) examination such as state (union) education service examination for all the schools in a particular state or in the country as a whole, as may be deemed fit

and proper.

- Entrust the task of preparation of national curriculum framework of B.Ed (Comprehensive) Degree as a joint responsibility of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and any other concerned national level body for offering it through face-to-face and distance modes with full parity of recognition.
- Gear up through appropriate mechanism all the Departments of Education (DEs) in Universities, Comprehensive Colleges of Education (CCEs), State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), Regional Colleges of Education (RCEs), Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs), Colleges of Education (CEs), Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and all other teacher training institutions to run only BEd (Comprehensive) Degree, to begin from a prescribed (particular) year, both as day-time and evening courses to meet the demand on war footing-basis.
- Provide uniform terms and conditions of service for faculty positions in all DEs in Universities (including State Open Universities), CCEs, SCERTs, RCEs, CTEs, CEs, IASEs, DIETs and other teacher training institutions. In order to promote qualitative recruitment of these faculty, there should be a common national level test such as national education service conducted every six months to facilitate quick filling of the vacancies from the panel of qualified candidates at that level.
- Entrust Indira Gandhi National Open University the task of launching BEd (Comprehensive) degree within the maximum period of three years by developing required self-instructional materials made essential part of its common curriculum of face-to-face and distance modes offered simultaneously for both pre-service and in-service candidates.
- Take prompt steps for ensuring compulsory establishment of all DEs in Universities (including those in State Open Universities), CCEs, SCERTs, RCEs, CTEs, CEs, IASEs, DIETs and all other teacher training institutions as Programme Study Centres for the BEd (Comprehensive) degree to be offered through distance mode by IGNOU as central/nodal organisation.
- Ensure that all schools, irrespective of their level, become the work centres of internship or practice-teaching and other practical work of teacher-trainees and make it an essential component for continued recognition of these schools at all levels. And also prescribe certain minimum number of teacher-trainees to be compulsorily taken by each school for facilitating performance by them of their internship or practice-teaching and other practical activities, as may be prescribed in the curriculum of B.Ed (Comprehensive) Degree.
- Allow and ensure admission of all the existing untrained graduate teachers into the in-service BEd (Comprehensive) Degree through distance education mode without any entrance test, and wherever possible, as evening regular programme of all DEs in Universities (including State Open Universities), CCEs, SCERTs, RCEs, CTEs, CEs, IASEs, DIETs and all other teacher training institutions and make it a condition that they all should complete it within prescribed time period or forfeit their positions/employment.
- Conduct a national level common entrance test for admission of the graduates to pre-service BEd (Comprehensive) Degree programme offered through regular/face-to-face and distance modes and ensure simultaneous admission to the programme in all DEs in Universities (including State Open Universities), CCEs, SCERTs, RCEs, CTEs, CEs, IASEs, DIETs and other teacher training institutions.
- Ensure the supply of the self-instructional material of B.Ed (Comprehensive) Degree developed by IGNOU to all these departments, colleges, councils and institutions for its use by the students of both in-service and pre-service programme through face-to-face and distance modes as a part of their education/training.
- Conduct simultaneous common examination at the end of the programme with common question papers

and with one common examination schedule for the BEd (Comprehensive) Degree and declare the results of the programme at a time throughout the country. There should be simultaneous convocation programme in all these departments, colleges, councils and institutions for award of degrees to the qualified candidates.

As far as hundred percent enrolment, retention and achievement of children in the school in the habitation of prescribed jurisdictional area is concerned, it shall be the collective responsibility of all the teachers and other staff/management of that school. The teacher-trainees under internship or doing practice-teaching and other practical work in that school must also be involved in the continuous annual school drive of children's enrolment, retention and achievement in that school. Some responsibility of admission of children into the school should be given to the local Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) covering the jurisdictional area of the school by involving it in the drive with specific responsibilities or thrust in that area.

CONCLUSION

Such a model of school and teacher education will surely make every child (the future citizen) a trilingual with equal opportunities to interact comfortably with all his peers and teachers in any part of the country right from beginning years of his/her schooling and with a feeling of one country promoting equal access to similar schools having same quality teachers deserving equal treatment and respect from the entire nation. Once such a model comes into existence and becomes operational throughout the country, it is not difficult to realise the goal of not only UEE but also see citizens with universalised secondary education. That would be the modern India with strongly united feeling of one nation and with robust education system providing for truly democratic, accessible and equitable education paving the way for uniform standard, recognition of parity, belongingness, concern and respect for each other. But, basic problem is fulfilling one essential condition, that is, infusing empathy, willingness, determination, commitment, sincerity, honesty and objective action on the part of the state and all others at the helm of affairs to realise such a model. Once that happens, it will lead to strongly integrated India with well trained citizenry geared to all global challenges and opportunities. It will also set itself a meaningful, acceptable and pragmatic model for other developing countries. One can only hope for such a model to come into existence!

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