

3.5 Vision of Institutionalizing New Ideas of the Education Commission: Focus on Open and Distance Learning

Introduction

The Education Commission Report (1964-66) is the first comprehensive study of the Indian System of Education right from the pre-schooling to research stage and is titled, 'Education and National Development'. The members of the EC were guided by the provisions in the Indian Constitution and by the aspirations and expectations of leaders of the Indian freedom struggle.

The Constitution, essentially tried to decentralize the political, knowledge and economic power concentrated in the traditional Indian Society in the hands of some sections of the people and to redistribute the powers to all people including the *women*, and the marginalized in Indian society. The constitutional rule in India is a great continuing process of democratization and is expected to influence all subsequent socio-economic changes and transformation.

During the freedom struggle, an alternative to the education system promoted by the British Rule had evolved in the form of Rastriya Shikshan (National Education) guided more by Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Basic Education (Buniyadi Shiksha) and Life Education (Jeevan Shiksha). The main approach of the Education Commission (EC) emanates from this background and aims at creating a National System, of Education linked to the life and development of the people of India. The Education Commission was expected to bring in a revolutionary change covering all people aimed at a radical reconstruction of the Indian society.

The EC Report guided subsequent development in Indian education and resulted in two major policy documents, National Policy on Education 1968 and 1986/1992 and numerous policies and programs that have changed the education system in the country and helped achieve impressive progress in education.

India has one of the biggest systems of education with a total enrolment of 189.2 million, with 81.1 million girl students and 5.45 million teachers in schools, nearly ten million students in 350 universities and 15,000 colleges with 420,000 teachers. This includes 11 open universities and 104 distance education institutions of dual mode; and the open university system has an enrolment of about 20 per cent of the total. The rate of growth since Independence is quite high, coverage has increased, dropout rate has got reduced, and the percentage of girl students in education increasing.

The focus of the paper is on the EC recommendations on the correspondence education or home study, which later on took the form of open and distance education, and added non-formal mode to the system of formal education. The Commission could not have anticipated the rapid development of the information technology (IT) leading to networking of people and places all over the globe, which has created a situation for the development of the post-industrialization

society. The new technology offers tools and technologies, which enable decentralization and mass participation on an unprecedented scale. These processes are typical of the information age and have no resemblance to any of the industrial and agrarian era. However, the ideas of the Commission rooted in the development of people, democratic decentralization, people's participation, and the bottom up approach have greater relevance in the Information Age. The issues related to the quality, quantity and equity - the illusive triangle of Indian education, - were addressed by the Commission. This forms the main focus of this paper.

EC Recommendations Related to Open and Distance Learning (ODL)

The Education Commission has considered educational reconstruction as the most general problem faced by the nation, and proposed programs that fall into three broad categories:

- *Internal transformation of the educational system* so as to relate it to life, needs and aspirations of the nation;
- *Qualitative improvement of education* so that the standards achieved are adequate, keep continually rising and, at least in a few sectors, become internationally comparable; and,
- *Expansion of educational facilities* broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities.

The Commission starts with a faith that "The destiny of the nation is now being shaped in the classroom " and considers education as the main instrument of change. It believes that in a "world based on science and technology, it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people". The most important and urgent reform needed in education is to transform it, to endeavour to relate it to the life, needs and expectations of the people and thereby make it a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of the national goals. For this purpose education should be developed so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernization and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values (Page 613 of EC Report, 1966).

This paper focuses on Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and in this context the EC recommendations are grouped under three headings:

1. *Expansion* of educational facilities through non-formal education,
2. *Transformation* of existing system into National System of Education, and
3. Initiating major changes and generating movement for radical reconstruction by creating '*Educational Revolution*'.

In all the three areas, the recommendations that are directly linked with Open and Distance Learning and, those recommendations that are linked with planning, financing, managing, etc., that support the development of ODL in the country are included.

Expansion

Non-formal Education: The major restriction observed by the Commission was the nature of full-time education then existing with the typical culture of academic studies, concentrating mostly on cognitive development of the individual. The Report recommends that "part-time and own-time education " should be developed on a larger scale at every stage and in every sector of education and should be given the same status as full-time education (Recommendation 13 on p. 617 of EC Report). The Commission distinguishes between part-time education as offered by the formal institutions and own- time education as that given through correspondence education.

In Chapter XVII on Adult Education, the Commission recommends eradication of illiteracy throughout the country within a shorter period reaching a literacy level of 80 per cent by 1976. Under the mass approach to eliminate illiteracy, EC recommends mobilisation of all educated men and women, all educational institutions to participate in a mass movement to eradicate illiteracy (p. 665, EC Report 202).

The Commission also proposes Continuing Education programs to be started by educational institutions by throwing their doors open, outside their regular working hours, to all those who wish to continue the education. It expects to create a parallel part-time system of education for adults for obtaining the same type of diplomas and degrees as students in schools and colleges (Recommendation 203).

Under EC recommendation 204, the Commission proposes to bring the education to those who are unable to take advantages of part-time education offered by an institution by organizing correspondence courses, which should provide:

- (i) Contact centers to interact with teachers, to use library and other facilities in the existing colleges, and the correspondence students should be given equal status as that of regular students.
- (ii) Support through radio and television programs.
- (iii) Courses in agricultural and industrial areas that would help workers to improve productivity.
- (iv) Courses to enrich lives by studying subjects of cultural and aesthetic value.
- (v) Courses for teachers in schools to keep them abreast with new knowledge, new methods and techniques of teaching.
- (vi) National Council of Home Studies to be established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with other Ministries, for the purpose of accreditation and evaluation of agencies, which provide correspondence courses, for identification of the areas in which different types of correspondence courses would be of benefit, for promoting creation of such courses through proper agencies and for conducting evaluation and research.
- (vii) Opportunity to take examinations conducted by the Secondary Education Board and universities in the country should be made available to those who wish to work on their own without any assistance.

The Commission expects the universities to assume a much larger role and responsibility for educating adults.

Educational Planning and Administration

The EC has the following recommendations on Educational Planning and Administration that are in the nature of ideas related to the organisation and management of ODL:

Planning (Recommendation 208, p. 667 of EC Report):

1. There has been an overemphasis on achievement of targets in enrolment and expenditure and there is, therefore, a need to take a more comprehensive view and evolve a broader pattern of goals, especially those relating to qualitative improvement.
2. The purpose of educational planning in a federal democracy has to be the right blend of centralization (and decentralization?- added) in the appropriate sectors and especially in administration. One useful suggestion, which can be made in this context, is to adopt a system of priorities at different levels - national, state and local.
3. School education is predominantly a local-State partnership and higher education is a Center-State partnership. It is this basic principle that should guide the evolution of the delicate balance between centralization and decentralization, which is essential for planning.

The Role of Private Enterprise (Recommendation 209, p. 667 of EC Report):

The future role of private enterprise in education should be broadly on the following principles:

- (a) As the private enterprise has played an important role in the development of education in modern India, the State should make all possible use of the assistance that can come from the private sector for the development of education,
- (b) The State has now rightly assumed full responsibility to provide educational facilities and private enterprise can, therefore, have only a limited and minor role.

The Role of Local Authorities (Recommendation 210, p. 667 of EC Report): The normal practice should be that of entrusting the right to administer the education with a local authority on two conditions—good administration and promote the cause of education. This privilege would be withdrawn if any of these conditions is violated:

1. As an ultimate objective it is essential that schools and their communities should be intimately associated with the processes of education.
2. The ultimate goal to be reached is the establishment, at the district level, of a competent local education authority, which may be designed as the District School Board and which would be in charge of all education in the district below the university level. This should also be accepted as a national policy.
3. In all cases of association of the local authorities with the education system, adequate safeguard should be provided to ensure that the teachers are not harassed and that they do not get involved in local factions and politics.

District and Municipal Boards should have separate School Boards with jurisdiction of the corresponding administrative areas of the Boards,

Educational Finance

The EC recommendations are:

1. Total Expenditure on Education (**Recommendation 223, p. 672 of EC Report**): The proportion of GNP should rise from its value of 2.9 per cent in 1965-66 to 6.0 per cent in 1985-86.
2. *Sources of Educational Finance* (Recommendation 225, p. 672 of EC Report): Although most of the responsibility for the support of education will be placed on governmental funds, a total centralization of all financial responsibility for education in the Government will not be desirable. Attempt should, therefore, be made to raise contributions from local communities, voluntary organisations and local authorities for this purpose.
3. *Economies and Utilization* (Recommendation 229, p. 673 of EC Report): Even with the mobilisation of maximum resources for education, the funds will still be inadequate to meet even the minimum needs of educational reconstruction, if conventional techniques involving large wastage and stagnation continue. It would, therefore, be necessary to adopt measures for economy, for eradication of wastage and for most efficient utilization of funds. All measures that promote economy consistent with efficiency should be adopted.

Transformation

Features of National Education: The educational institutions of a national character established by the leaders of the Freedom Movement—Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi—like the Rastriya Shala/Vidyapeet (National School/University), based on basic and life-related education linked with people were the alternative to the educational institutions under the colonial rule. The Education Commission accepted the idea and formulated it in the form of a National System of Education. The basic thrust of the recommendations of the Commission is to restructure and transform the system of school, college and university education in the country into a comprehensive National System of Education.

The *National System of Education* (Naik, 1982) should have the following features:

1. It should be based on our own traditions and be suited to the life, needs and aspirations of our people,
2. It should emphasize education of all people.
3. It should use regional languages as medium of instruction with Hindi as a link language and English as an academic language for access to universal knowledge.
4. It should eliminate difference between individuals educated in the modern education system and that of people's education.

5. It should emphasize science and technology education for modernization and elimination of poverty.
6. It should inculcate a spirit of patriotism and pride in our cultural heritage, and
7. It should emphasize moral and aesthetic values.

Educational Revolution

Education as an Instrument of Change: If this *change on a grand scale* is to be achieved without violent revolution (and even then it would still be necessary) there is one instrument, and one instrument only, that can be used: EDUCATION. Other agencies may help, and can indeed sometimes have a more apparent impact. But the national system of education is the only instrument that can reach all the people (p. 4 of EC Report).

The direct link between education, development and prosperity, which the Commission has emphasized and in which it deeply believed, "exists only when the national system of education is properly organized, from both qualitative and quantitative points of view". All education is necessarily not good, both for individuals and for society, and the faith that education will necessarily lead to progress can be harmful as it is misplaced. History shows numerous instances that the social groups or elites having control over power—political, economic or knowledge—have used it as their prerogative and tool to maintain their hegemony and perpetuation, often in collusion with other power groups. The social and cultural revolution has often brought about changes in an educational system that offer educational opportunities to people and harness their potential and talent in solving problems of development and progress. A system of university education that produces large proportion of graduates, with high competency and professionalism, with high quality is of great value in development of manpower that is used for higher productivity and prosperity. However, university education, which produces majority of its graduates without proper development of manpower in terms of competencies, professional skills and quality, adds to the large number of unemployed graduates. In such cases when the education is indifferent and not linked with national development, it will have the opposite result.

"The main concern of the Commission is to achieve radical reconstruction and transformation in education and development in terms of higher quality, quantity and equality with high transformative value in terms of social, economic and cultural changes. When such changes are brought about with unprecedented speed, coverage, inclusiveness and impact, the change then is not an evolution but amounts to a revolution".

Implementation of the EC Report

J.P. Naik, the Member Secretary of the EC and virtually the writer of the Report, has reviewed the Education Commission Report in his book 'Education Commission and After' (Naik, 1982) and categorized the recommendations into three groups; namely those that:

- (a) Attracted wide attention,
- (b) Limited attention, and

(c) Opposed or rejected or just ignored.

J.P. Naik includes Non-formal Education, Education of the People and the Common School System (Restructuring into 10 + 2 + 3 years in school and university education for the first degree) in the first group (wide attention) and includes in the third group (rejected or opposed) recommendations related to major universities, selective admissions at the higher secondary and university stages, selective improvement of schools, etc. Recommendations related to work experience; vocationalisation, value education and character building, decentralization, etc. are in the middle category that received moderate attention.

In the expansion of the education system, the "home study and own-time education" received the widest response and during the last four decades, the open learning system expanded beyond expectations. It has not only expanded to increase access and quality education, but now has become one of the major policies to promote non-formal education for increasing access and coverage. One of the major factors that received attention is its lower unit cost and openness. We review the ODL as it developed through Open Schools and single and dual mode universities.

Non-formal Education: Home Study and Own-Time Education

During the last four decades, the home study and own-time study expanded as non-formal education at three levels:

1. *Primary level:* Non-formal school education for school drop outs.
2. *Secondary level:* Open School programs
3. *Tertiary level:* Open university programs

In fact, the non-formal education is the only program that has received so much attention of the state and people that it has now become an important component of the Indian Education System. As in many other countries, the reason for this liberalization and introduction of newer mode of education is more because of political initiative and pressure that called for expansion of access to education. Later on, the economic benefits of correspondence courses for supporting formal education also became an important motivational factor in the expansion of the correspondence and distance education.

Major steps in Establishing Open School System

1. The first Correspondence Course started by the Delhi University in 1962 was motivated by the then Soviet Union system of correspondence education for working adults. However, it was started at the university level rather than at the school level for evolving the program with quality (Dewal and Biswas, 2006).
2. In 1965 the use of correspondence courses was started for secondary students by the Madhya Pradesh Government at the instance of the Council of Boards of School Education to improve the academic status of private candidates appearing for Board examinations. The other two boards that followed were Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education and the *Patrachar Vidyalaya*, Delhi, in 1968 (Dewal and Biswas, 2006).

3. The UNESCO Report (1972), "Learning to Be", advocated important ideas of learning society, life-long-learning (L3) and use of alternative schooling systems, which changed thinking of educationists and policy makers. The Satellite Instructional TV Experiment (SITE) in 1975-76, with the help of satellite ATS-6 launched by the USA for a year, and the establishment of the Center for Educational Technology by the Space Application Center of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Ahmedabad, created not only a partnership of two departments, the MHRD and ISRO, but also ensured the ISRO participation in the development of communication technology for education.
4. The Parthasarathy Committee Report 1975: Obviously impressed by the UK Open University, the first single mode university in the world, the Report proposed that a National Open University should be established in India. Since the universalisation of primary education was the key national policy and its provision a constitutional obligation of the Government, there was a shift in decision from the Open University to open school. And the pilot project of the Open School of the Central Board of Secondary Education was started in 1979.
 - (a) The Pilot Project: The Open School program started with a pilot project had the following objectives (Dewal and Biswas, 2006).
 - (b) To offer opportunities of education to children who complete class VIII but are unable to remain in a regular school;
 - (c) To meet the demand for secondary education consequent upon fulfillment of the target of elementary education;
 - (d) To serve the drop-outs, left-outs, and the push-outs in order to bring them back to the mainstream;
 - (e) To offer an opportunity to girls and women who have no previous qualification but are desirous of receiving education;
 - (f) To offer a programme of supervised self-learning for those adults who have entered the world of work but wish to improve their career prospects;
 - (g) To equip children and adults of rural areas and to enable them to receive the benefits of latest technologies so that they can contribute to maximization of production and improvement of standard of living;
 - (h) To serve those children who belong to the disadvantaged sections of the community, and
 - (i) To provide a process of continuous life-long-learning.
5. The responsibility of the Open School was to evolve an alternative school system—a non-formal mode of education—to serve the school drop-outs as well as adults, thereby increasing access and coverage including the disadvantaged ones by evolving flexible entry requirements, offering

wider choices to meet the needs of learners, and by evolving flexible and appropriate system of examination and certification.

The Pilot Project of Open School was quite a success in getting the idea of open school wider acceptance throughout the country, in developing multi-level courses, in creating syllabi with self- instructional learning materials, in evolving a flexible student support and examination system with a certification process equal to the formal certification offered by various boards. The Central Government also gave all the necessary support to make the non- formal stream acceptable to institutions and people.

6. National Open School: After a decade of the pilot project, a National Open School (NOS) was established in 1989 under the Ministry of Human Resource Development as an autonomous body, which included the programs and activities of the CBSE Pilot Project. Since its establishment, the NOS have expanded its programs to include senior secondary education, vocational education, regional language programs, Urdu language programs, open basic education programs, etc. It also started giving academic, economic and technical support to the State Open Schools. The NOS has started using ICT in its operations since 1989, and has now a well-developed Computer Division, which handles most of the NOS operations of materials development and publishing, management of databases, software development and installation, etc. (www.nos.org). Applications such as on-demand and on-line examinations are taken up for development. The NOS has thus played an important role as the apex organisation for giving support to research, development, training and extension activities of open schooling in India. As an apex agency for Open Basic Education (primary education), the NOS provides the broad learning outcomes, high quality study materials, text-free sample questions and blue print of examination paper with suggestive marking schemes to the Accredited Agencies carrying out the basic education program. The NOS was converted into the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in 2005-06 (website: www.nios.ac.in).
7. State Open Schools: Since India is a Union of 29 states and six union territories, with different languages and dialects, with socio-cultural diversities, it is obvious that a single National Open School cannot serve the purpose of giving access to school education to students from all over the country. So far, 10 State Open Schools have been established: Tamil Nadu (1982), Andhra Pradesh (1991), Punjab (1991), Haryana (1994), Madhya Pradesh (1996), Karnataka (1996), West Bengal (1997), Kerala (1999), Jammu & Kashmir (2001) and Rajasthan (2005). Thus the NIOS and the ten State Open Schools form quite a large system of imparting education through distance mode.
8. National Consortium for Open Schooling (NCOS) and National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS): With the expansion of the open schools in states, a need was felt to coordinate and promote the open schooling program in the country. The NIOS is expected to provide program and resource support to the open schools at the state levels. A National Consortium for Open Schooling was formed in 1997 consisting of the NOS and all the state open schools and other related agencies; and the NOS served as the secretariat of the NCOS (Williams, 2006). The NOS was, therefore, re-christened as National Institute of Open Schooling in 2002 to cover its additional functions (website: www.nios.ac.in). As an apex organisation, the NIOS carries out the same activities as its state counterparts, but has a leadership role to play in open schooling.

Quality Assurance in ODL (Open Distance Learning) and Distance Education Council

The EC recommended establishment of a National *Council of Home Studies* for the purpose of accreditation and evaluation of agencies, and also for supporting research, development and deployment of content. The establishment of the IGNOU and NOS is a major step in implementing the EC recommendations. The provision of Distance Education Council was made in the IGNOU Act and the DEC came into existence after a few years of successful working of the IGNOU. Similar provision does not exist for open schooling.

The Distance Education Council (DEC) has the responsibility of coordination, promotion and maintenance of standards in distance education. The DEC is also another arm of the IGNOU, which functions as an open university and also as a promotional agency. This role has created many problems due to conflict of interests with the State Open Universities due to the IGNOU's dual role of a university and a promotional agency for all distance education in India. The DEC has evolved a framework for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in partnership with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). However, the DEC has followed a different path of quality control by evolving different process of quality control (Garg *et al.*, 2006). Because of the conflicts of interests of the state and national open universities, it is proposed to separate the DEC from IGNOU and form it into a national agency responsible for quality and standards in distance education. It appears that the separation is being done when convergence of formal, non-formal and informal education is taking place, when entirely different and integrative approach is essential due to the emergence of e-education or distributed education.

Achievements, Issues and Concerns of ODL

In this section we consider the achievements of open school and university education system briefly and also the fulfillment of the ideas of EC Report.

Achievements of NIOS and Open Schooling: Main Features

The NIOS has implemented practically all the aspects of the self and own- study suggested by the Education Commission and has succeeded in creating efficient, effective and alternative open school system.

1. By adopting a policy of institutional accreditation for imparting open school education, NIOS has roped in quite a large number of public and private schools and NGOs to increase access to variety of target groups.
2. With a large number of accredited institutions giving delivery of education, the coordination and maintenance of standards becomes an important issue. The training of center-coordinators and teacher- tutors is undertaken with usual cascading approach. It would be essential to develop systems for ensuring quality of education imparted at the accredited centers and progress of learners. The NIOS is trying to do this by using networking and using IT in its administrative and academic functions.

3. Since giving free primary school education is the constitutional responsibility of the Governments, both of the Union and State, and there is a ban on employment of children for earning up to the age of 14 years, a full-time school education is going to be the main and dominant formal mode of education. In such a situation, the open school system becomes a corrective mechanism for schooling system up to standard VIII, and assumes the role of an alternative mode for students over 14 years of age and adults.
4. The school system in India is more of a social nature and not a professional system. Hence, it is the concern of quite a large section of the Indian society, involving parents, communities and private enterprise, which offer supplementary help to students in their studies. The total size of the society involved in education including students is nearly 20 per cent of the population. The proportion of students covered by the open schooling is quite small as compared to the total number of learners in schools.

Achievements of Open University System

The ODL has impressive achievements to its credit. It has not only established alternative educational system (non-formal system), but also created a nationally accepted alternative for India for increasing access and coverage with quality and cost-efficiency. Following are the main outcomes of the ODL:

1. The ODL has increased outreach in terms of coverage, numbers, subject disciplines, age of learners, occupational background, etc.
2. The ODL has helped in reducing unit cost of education, which is quite substantial in general as well as in professional courses. It is up to one-half in case of professional courses requiring laboratories and one-fifth to one-tenth in case of general and liberal courses. The cost also depends on the quality maintained in the development and delivery of the programs.
3. The ODL is now using ICT in various administrative and management processes for increasing efficiency of communication and achieving cost-reduction. The ODL has created a vast network of physical facilities such as study and regional centers spread all over the country, a large number of teachers-facilitators in the ODL along with a local student support system.
4. One of the greatest achievements is the creation of quality learning materials prepared by the open universities. It has raised the quality of instructional materials by adopting excellent pedagogic designs and has enhanced the quality of study texts by employing best expertise, experience and teachers. The learning is supplemented by audio and videotapes, and by radio and TV lessons as well as distributed classroom of the type of one-way video and two way audio. This has helped in raising the quality of education.

India has already accepted the ODL as an alternative for increasing access and outreach. It is expected that the proportion of the ODL students in higher education system is expected to increase to 40 per cent by 2012.

Limitations and Shortcomings In ODL

1. ***The Same Form & Structure of Degree Programs:*** The ODL in Open University system has evolved an alternative delivery mode with a lot of flexibility. However, it has maintained the same form and structure leading to degree or diploma certification. This is possibly to have recognition from employers and acceptance from society. The goals and objects of degree programs remain the same and have not advanced to make the system a National System of Education.
2. ***Linkages with Workplaces:*** The emphasis on people's education with a focus on productivity is yet to get developed and built-in in the system for high school, senior secondary and vocational education. Linking education with productivity demands linking learning with work-place based training and education and its linking with value addition in terms of socio-economic development.
3. ***Limited Coverage and Access:*** The existing size of the ODL in school system is too small and forms a very small fraction of the total size of school education. At the university level it is appreciable, but not enough to call it a people's system.
4. ***Lack of Access to Media:*** Study text forms the main study materials for large majority of students. Use of electronic media in study is yet very limited.
5. ***Lack of Coordination:*** There is an overlap of target groups to be covered by the open schooling and Open University education. The OU education is for mature adults and many OUs have brought down the age from 21 years to 18 years for open admission for the preparatory course essential for open degree programs without 12th pass. Since open schools also cater to mature adults, it is essential to have coordination in the programs to serve the mature adults.

EC Recommendations and ODL

The Education Commission's faith that "The destiny of the nation is now being shaped in the classrooms" is not assuming a different form in which conventional classroom or formal education has to accept the partnership of the ODL due to the development in ICT.

What has not happened as per the recommendations of the EC Report is as follows:

EC Recommendation 203: The Commission proposed Continuing Education programs to be started by all the educational institutions by throwing their doors open, outside their regular working hours, to all those who wish to continue education. The EC expects to create a parallel part-time system of education for adults for taking the same type of diploma and degrees as students in schools and colleges.

Comment: This has not happened, partly because of restrictive policies and also due to unsuitability of the existing ODL system to fulfill the needs and demands of the large sections of people. It is still very much 'teacher- centric ' and does not respond to the needs and requirements of the people.

National Council of Home Studies was expected to be established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with other Ministries, for the purpose of accreditation and evaluation of agencies, which provide correspondence courses. The purpose of educational planning in a

Federal democracy has to be the right blend of centralization and decentralization in the appropriate sectors and especially in administration.

Comment: The Distance Education Council was created within the IGNOU and MHRD domain. It does not cover the education and training programs offered under different ministries. The island tendency of the authorities and institutions dominates and there is no effective mechanism to coordinate continuing education across all the ministries at the central and state levels.

The present top-down approach of planning and development carried out centrally through various agencies has strong limitations of involved interests and structures.

Role of Private Enterprise (Recommendation 209, p. 667 of EC Report): The EC recommended that:

- (a) The state should make all possible use of the assistance that can come from the private sector for the development of education.
- (b) The state has now rightly assumed full responsibility to provide all the needed educational facilities and the private enterprise can, therefore, have only a limited and minor role.

Comment: The State has adopted a policy of promoting private sector in school as well as university education. This has led to the stratification of educational systems according to the cost and quality accessible to the people, thereby creating stratified society according to the level and quality of education.

In fact, the public system of education created for all with the state support has been neglected and is languishing. Quality institutions of education, such as the IITs and IIMs, have been created either with the state support as a national policy or with the private support. A quality alternative is made available to those who can afford, whereas the quality and standards of education institutions for public is deteriorating fast. The country is following dual policies; the first is to create quality institutions, even by inviting private contribution, to compete with developed countries particularly in the present scenario of global competitiveness essential for national progress, and the other is to expand existing public facilities, mostly of poor quality, for providing wider access. Currently, even the poor are paying heavily for the education of their children to enable them rise in the quality hierarchy. What is essential in the present circumstances is not only education for all but quality education for all for reducing disparities and divides in the society.

The Role of Local Authorities (Recommendation 210, p. 667 of EC Report): As an ultimate objective it is essential that schools and their communities should be intimately associated with the processes of education.

Comment: Close linkage of the education system with society and industry is yet to be established on a scale that would impact the society in its development. The education has always remained a weak subsystem of the total socio-economic system and has yet to play a 'center-stage' role.

Educational Finance: Economies and Utilization (Recommendation 229, p. 673 of EC Report): Even with the mobilisation of maximum resources for education, the funds will still be inadequate to meet even the minimum needs of educational reconstruction, if conventional techniques involving large wastage and stagnation continues. It would, therefore, be necessary to adopt measures for economy, for eradication of wastage and for most efficient utilization of funds.

Comment: A stage has now developed wherein 'more of the same' is not going to change the system. The transformation has to go far beyond the drive for efficiency and productivity. The system needs a paradigm shift or entirely new paradigm to address the concerns of quality and equality and equity.

The EC expected to create National System of Education (Naik, 1982) for people's education on a scale and coverage that would serve the purpose of a learning society. The EC proposed many measures with a goal for creating 'Educational Revolution'. The National Education System should become a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of the national goals. It should also emphasize moral and aesthetic values.

Comment: This is yet to be achieved. The change expected should emphasize education of people, should eliminate differences between individuals educated in the modern education system, formal or non-formal. In fact, what is essential is a system that would unite and integrate the people and nation and not stratify the society. Some of the issues, particularly of quality education for all for evolving a system of people's education, is dealt with in the further part of this paper.

Education and National Development

The EC had a certain vision of India of tomorrow and of national development. It looked forward to the creation of a democratic, secular and egalitarian society, which should be based on science and spiritual values and wherein evils of poverty, ignorance and ill health would be eliminated through a humane use of scientific and technological knowledge (Naik, 1982)

The nature of vision of India of tomorrow has now radically changed and the EC recommendations on national system of education have to be reformulated on the basis of the emerging knowledge, economy and knowledge society. This brings in subjectivity for vision and perspectives, an unavoidable factor in perspective building. We follow here the analysis given by J P Naik in his book, Education Commission and After (1982) and consider the third model of development based on Gandhian thoughts, besides, of course, the other two models of capitalist and socialist development already being tried and implemented in India.

The EC Report was titled, Education and National Development. However, it suffers from some inadequacies. The first is that its formulation, based on many positive statements for productivity and prosperity of the nation to be achieved through the system of education, is rather naive and unsatisfactory. Secondly, the EC does not refer to the many crucial aspects of development. The relationship between education and society is also not clear in as much as development is linked with social reconstruction. The EC expected that the change should be brought about in a big way.

UGC Policy Frame

Since the EC Report, many policies and programs were adopted that added to the developmental concerns of the society. Addition of extension as the third dimension in the Policy Frame of the UGC (1976), the programs of adult and continuing education, National Social Service scheme started in every university and college are some activities that have become now a part of higher education. In schools too, the introduction of socially useful productive work tried to link school education with community development. However, all these activities have remained peripheral and did not get integrated with the "classroom" or mainstream education. In some universities these subjects have become academic disciplines, followed well-trodden path of teaching courses and curriculum leading to degrees. However, it is not commensurate with the needs of the society for productivity and has little employability.

UNESCO and Development

The international community, after a series of regional and international seminars organized by the UNESCO, had approved in the United Nation's General Assembly two major programs of development:

- Millennium Development Goals (MDG) adopted in 2000, and
- Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DE4SD) for the period 2005-2014 adopted in December 2002.

The MDGs is an overarching framework for development and for cooperation; and provide targets for international actions to bring such visions into reality by overcoming poverty; improving child, maternal and sexual health; expanding educational provision; redressing gender inequalities in education; and developing national strategies for sustainable development. The MDG program is followed by all developing countries and is regularly monitored internationally by the UNESCO with a goal of eliminating poverty, providing health and livelihood security for all.

The DE4SD emphasizes that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development and stresses the necessity to improve educational systems and the design of learning programmes for sustainable development. Sustainable development is a dynamic and evolving concept with many dimensions and interpretations, and reflects locally relevant and culturally appropriate visions for a world in which development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UNESCO, 2004).

Both these programs are the outcome of aspirations, needs and requirements of the new knowledge society emerging in the 21st Century. The two programs, therefore, can form the 21st Century. The two programs, therefore, can form the goals to be achieved along with cultivation of life-long-learning (L3) process for development.

Developmental Models and Sustainability

One of the major issues in linking education with development is its model and its suitability to Indian needs, context and culture. Indian Constitution adopted the socialist model of development with many programs that aim at social welfare, support to the weaker and the disadvantaged and provide minimum essential living standards to common people. However, the policies of social welfare and support to the weak and disadvantaged are without any developmental model. Simultaneous processes of liberalization and privatization are going on to be competitive and progressive in the context of globalisation. The two processes of privatization and social empowerment are not apparently compatible, and often clash in goals, approaches and interests. However, the power of Indian democracy that decides the polity to govern the state, has made the leadership accountable to the people, at least once in a few years. This has enabled the pursuit of two apparently contradictory processes that pull in opposite directions. The developmental pulls in opposite direction has to be understood in terms of bi-polar objectives—both being essentially positive in character but tending to pull policy projections in opposite directions. As pointed out by Moonis Raza, the model of Indian education has "essentially been based on decisions relating to trade-off between 'so to say' two 'goods'. What appears, as directionless meandering of educational policy in Independent India should be appreciated as the operationalisation of compensatory mechanisms generated by the turbulence of transition from underdevelopment to development. Some of the important pulls have been identified as those of quantitative expansion to qualitative improvement, of equity and efficiency, of value and utility, of commitment and detachment, of integration and differentiation, of concentration and dispersal, of autonomy and accountability, and lastly of the 'pure' academic and the 'involved' teacher" (M. Raza, 1991).

Growth and Promotion of IT in India

The Makinley Report based on the studies conducted at the behest of the **National** Association of Software & Service Companies of India (NASSCOM- www.nasscom.org) predicts robust growth for the Indian IT services and IT Enabled Services industry. It may grow to US \$ 57 billion in exports by the year 2008. Further, it is expected that the Indian companies would eventually move up from the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) or Call Centers to KPO (Knowledge Process Outsourcing). In the near future India would be the third largest economy after the USA and China.

The IT industry's growth has multiple effects on India (The Economic Times, 2005) because of the rising class of younger consumers with high disposable income. The IT has helped spawning of ancillary businesses such as transportation, real estate, communication and catering, and created quite high employment opportunities, particularly for the engineers, graduates and for the professionally qualified. Reasons attributed to this growth are due to leadership with strong foundation of:

- Large pool of English speaking manpower, and
- Emphasis on quality at significantly low costs.

Information Technology applications are fast spreading in India. Mobile telephony is one of the sectors witnessing very fast growth and is expected to reach nearly 500 million Indians by 2010. The broadband connectivity is expanding fast through optical fiber as well as through wireless

Internet. The Indian Government is supporting the IT industry by creating infrastructure development, attracting investment by reducing corporate taxes and creating a stable tax system, and by setting up Knowledge Commission to support IT related development.

The ICT application and promotion in India are so rapid that a great impact is expected in all areas of the economy and society. The changes are already being seen and amount to a revolution—the *Information Revolution*. The IT is developing in such a way that convergence of telephony, broadcasting and computing would occur on two 'screens'—TV screen for home use and cell-phone screen for mobile use. The Triple Play Broadband Technology has started its applications in India, and would offer the services through telephone wire to every TV screen in a house within 5-10 years.

The rapid development of newer and versatile technologies in IT is expected to change the nature of communication. The technologies such as development of high fidelity Internet that can deliver "immersive" technologies and nano technologies are going to change the communication industry and help in raising the overall quality of life. The major direction of development visualized by 2020 is of personalization of mass technologies and linking with local, contextual and need-based aspects of developmental processes. The it can help humanization lost in the industrial society (R. Venkateshan, 2005).

All these developments would have a profound impact on education. The IT would enable development of mass-personalized education with just-in-time learning services. Education could be linked with places of working and living of anyone anywhere. Education, if developed properly with ICT support, could be a great equalizer.

Wider applications of IT in all walks of life are creating an information society and knowledge economy. Applicable, knowledge is going to drive development and, with all the communication technologies enabling access to various services, it is likely to help reversal of centralization processes started in industrial society with concentration of industries and services in urban cities. By providing urban infrastructure in rural areas essential for cultural and healthy life, the ICT may help in accelerating the decentralization, and may bridge the rural-urban divide in India.

Information Technology promotes three main processes:

- *Visualization* in which any organisation or institution or group of institutions could be developed as a distributed system working together and communicating with each other as if they are on a single campus.
- *Digitization* in which content could be digitized and communicated to anyone, anywhere linked with e-network.

- *Mass-Personalization or Customization* is a process in which products and services could be customized or personalized besides their *massification*.

These are entirely new processes typical of Information Technology and did not exist in earlier technologies that helped form the industrial or agrarian society. The IT could be used effectively for techno-social transformation by innovating tools & techniques and by creating new organisations to help shaping of a new society on a value system that we use to create organisations and institutions. Following are some of the tools and technologies that would play a vital role in evolving new paradigms:

Platform for Level Playing Field for All

The Learning Management System (LMS') and network platforms that enable to offer learning and developing services for working individually and in a group.

People's Tools and Technologies

Open Education and Development Resources created centrally and globally through open participation for free use by all (Approach of Wikipedia - www.wikipedia.org).

Open Education Resources

Local Knowledge Creation Platform and Tools that help generate local databases, which would enable locals to get information, knowledge and apply useful knowledge for creating wealth and prosperity.

Technologies to Create Virtual Communities with Specific Interests

Virtual Private Network (VPN) on global platforms for L-groups and L- communities for development organized on the basis of common purpose and interest and run with democratic principles of participation and decentralization.

Distributed Systems for Learning, Educating, Working Together and Developing

Distributed Systems for enabling production companies & provider groups/ agencies and customers to partner in production and services and share outcomes and wealth, not monetary alone.

Many of these technologies and tools are available, and the IT industry is in the process of developing newer ones. This process of technology development may last for two-three decades till the IT matures or reshapes itself in a completely new form. The development is on the basis of market forces and is competitive in nature. Alternative model of development with cooperative working to fulfill felt and perceived needs of the stakeholders needs to be evolved in such a way that customers and users also participate in the productive and service processes (Distributed industries and agencies).

Third Model of Development

Besides the two models—capitalist or privatization model and socialist or public model of development, a third model, the Gandhian Model of development, could be conceived and

developed in the context of information revolution to solve the illusive triangle of quality, quantity and equality in education. The third model should address the problems of equality and justice on the basis of liberty, equality and fraternity, the trinity of human values evolved in the French Revolution and adopted by the Indian Constitution. A principle of Private-Public-Community Partnership with a win-win approach has the force and potential in a system of democratic governance to integrate the first two models and help evolve the third one in the context of the Knowledge Society.

Elements of the Third Way

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of education for life, from life and throughout life is the basis of Life Education (Jeevan Shikshan) and could form the foundation for the Indian National System of Education expected in the EC Report.

Elements of the Gandhian Developmental models that are amenable to Information Revolution are:

1. *Trusteeship concept* expressed through private-public-community partnership with a win-win approach.
2. *Self-supporting and sustainable village* expressed through sustainable locality of the group of villages or a block (corresponding to PURA [APJ Abdul Kalam, 2003])
3. *Participatory democracy at local and central levels* - regional, national and international created through global and local networks, enabling individuals/locals to form groups and communities and to participate in development and progress with autonomy.
4. *Economy based on surrounding nature* and its abundance changed to central-local open learning and development resources openly available for locality development with global markets accessible to all.
5. *Handicraft with appropriate technologies for giving livelihood to everyone* to be replaced by development of personalized/ customized need-based products and services to be offered by locals to anyone, anywhere by forming learning and developing communities with sustainability and by having local as well as global participation.
6. System of Values based on openness, transparency, fairness, sharing and caring along with search for truth and satyagraha as a form of protest and agitation against exploitation and injustice being common to both old and new models.

The purpose of considering these points is not to develop the Gandhian Model, which itself is a very difficult and complex task, but to consider those technologies, organisations and values that would empower the common people and their groups (Learning Groups/Self-Help Groups) to achieve sustainable development through Information Communication Technologies. They would, it is hoped, be enabling to identify basic elements of locality development and progress

for common people in consonance with the global direction of development. Identification of these components and processes, it is hoped, would lead to formation of Gandhian Model of Education for sustainable and autonomous locality development or Indian Model of National System of Education. In this transformation, education would obviously be playing the central role.

Educational Revolution for Developing National System of Education

Educational Revolution: The idea of educational revolution for radical social transformation for developing a National System of Education proved to be a dream of the Commission. J.P. Naik (1982) has analyzed the reasons for its failure. Firstly, in the EC Report, the change agents for the Educational Revolution were supposed to be teachers, students, managers of education and the state and central governments. This was a wrong identification. The people who form the part of the power structure with vested interests cannot be expected to bring about revolutionary changes wherein there is devolution of power and sharing of benefits on the basis of equality.

J.P. Naik identifies five reasons for holding up the Educational Revolution from take off:

1. Separation of education for students and adults.
2. Wrong use of tools and techniques—preservation of formal rigid system
3. Non-involvement of people
4. Failure in improving the living standards of masses—poverty eradication.
5. Cooling down of missionary zeal of educational intelligence.

No revolution existed in the 20th Century. The only revolution available now is a Communication Revolution, with which Education Revolution could be started.

The Change Agents now should be all "teachers": all those who participate in educating and training teachers, tutors, trainers in industry and parents and community could become the teachers and change agents for educational revolution. It would be essential to empower the people—the "teachers—to undertake the socio-economic transformation with the help of education for development. The process for revolution, rather total revolution, was once developed in India without success by the movement of J.P. Narayan, a political leader, and involved processes of education, organisation, creation and agitation. This is possible only when education gets linked with socio-economic transformation of the society. Development is always a participatory work, involving students and people, and is carried out successfully through cooperative working under a suitable leadership. The process of empowerment is enhanced and accelerated with networking of people, knowledge, developmental and technology resources and the success requires a leadership system that would be committed to the people for safeguarding their interests. Examples of such an empowerment are the success stories of Grameen Bank of Bangladesh or Lijjat Papad in India working for socio-economic development. In fact, mobilisation of learning and developing groups with specific interest like women's self-help groups can become part of a larger organisation of a learning and developing community to give organizational support for protecting their interests, vis-a-vis private and public institutional interests.

A Model of ODL for Development

Information Technology is bringing about changes that amount to an information revolution with the emergence of Information or Knowledge Society. The ICT has changed the entire basis of communication needed for teaching, learning and teacher-learner interaction. Many new paradigms could be designed and developed including the existing one in which teacher-centricity could be retained with top-down flow of knowledge or the so-called 'donor' model.

Education for development changes the whole scenario. It brings in not only learning usually promoted to achieve knowledge, actionable or non-actionable, but also the processes of development through actionable knowledge. Application of actionable knowledge to create new products or services or to add value to the existing products and services is a process of development essential for achieving progress and prosperity. The process is specific to the group or institution or people involved, has a local context as well as the use of universal knowledge and old or new tools and technique appropriate to the tasks undertaken. The process essentially is of continuous development generated to achieve higher quality of outputs and outcomes^ It is also a capability building process for a group or institution to rise to higher levels of achievements and gets repeated cyclically till one reaches the best in the class or type of work.

The concept of quality is defined in many ways. Usually the definitions are objective or perspective in nature. The objective definitions of quality includes the concept of exceptional as well as those that conform to the highest norms and standards, The perspective definitions of quality include the concepts such as fitness for the purpose, value for the money or transformative value expected. In the case of developmental education, the idea of transformative value is used to find the outcomes and impacts of the efforts of learning and development.

Capability Development Model for Learning and Development

This model is based on Baldrige Model of Education for Performance Excellence (www.baldrige.com) and uses terms and concepts that form the basis of the Baldrige Model for education. The terms used here are taken from the Baldrige Model with a constraint that they are used for development of individuals, small groups and organisations (I-CONSENT, 2006).

1. Situational Tasks in case of Education, the learning situations are class, school or college and society and learners are individuals, small groups, and their virtualization. The *Goals and Objects* are obtained from the needs analysis of students, stakeholders and market focus,
2. *Approaches* refer to methods, their appropriateness, effectiveness and systemic nature.

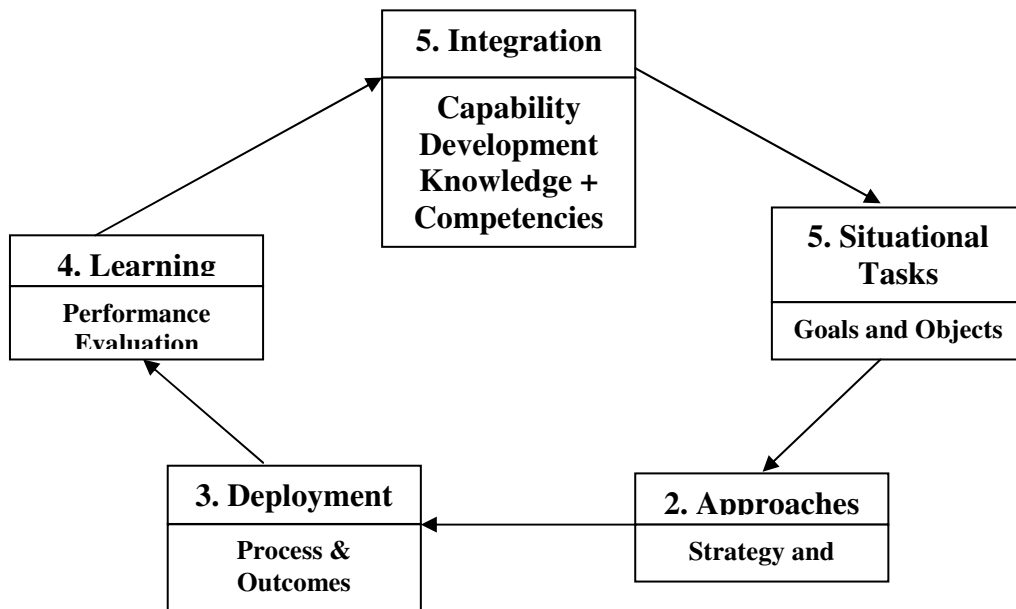


Fig. 20.1: Capacity Development Model for Learning and Development

3. *Deployment* refers to the extent to which the approach is made relevant to local situation/organisation, applied consistently to all related works in the tasks.
4. *Learning* refers to refining the approach adopted through cycles of evaluation and improvements, encouraging breakthrough changes and innovations through approaches, and by harmonizing actions, processes and methods, and by obtaining outcomes and impacts through group/organization wide systemic changes.
5. *Integration* refers to aligning approaches selected for the local situations to those that are relevant to regional/national/global goals and approaches, making measures, evaluation and improvements complimentary to other processes and work outcomes/impacts in other situational tasks, and harmonizing learning and improvements across group/organisation wide goals.

The model offers continuous process of improving and developing the situations and adding more and more transformative value with continuous building up of capabilities of students, stakeholders and organisation. This is a cyclic process of locality development for achieving excellence.

Mobilisation and continuous improvement processes implied in the model need:

- *Organisation and management system* for stakeholders, partners and resource management system.
- *Leadership system at all levels in wide variety of situations for forming, managing groups and their interest specific communities through sharing and collaborative learning.*

A learner would need a different culture—a culture of Knowledge Society of the 21st Century, with Life-Long-Learning (L3) and continuously developing through Learning (L)-groups and L-communities. Every learner has to be equipped with:

1. Learning to Learn for knowing (self study)
2. Learning by doing (Active Learning)
3. Learning through virtual processes such as Distributed Classroom.
4. Cooperative Learning - Group Learning and Developing.
5. Learning through experimenting and innovating - Prayog Pariwar.

The learning processes imply a shift from teaching to learning; and the role of teachers and educational resources would be to support learning and personalization essential for the learner or their group to follow their learning path to achieve goals of learning and development.

Needs Total Innovation

A program of big changes envisaged in the Education Revolution can happen only when we solve the puzzle of iron triangle of quality-quantity-equity or achieve success in providing quality education for all. This is not possible by any means and methods of agrarian or industrial society. It needs tools and technologies of Information Age. It involves organisation or mobilisation of people into learning and developing groups and their communities. What is needed is a total innovation in techno-social organisation of ODL for Development with following features:

1. *Technology use* for giving total e-governance support both in administration and academic programs.
2. *Content organisation and deployment* on pedagogic principles for learning and developing.
3. *Organisation of stakeholders* for Life-Long-Learning (L3) and developing.
4. *New System Design* with goals and approaches for promoting creativity, innovation and entrepreneurs!]ip leading to productivity and prosperity.
5. *System with Core Values* for helping cooperative working and consortium building of provider organisations and institutions as well the user groups and communities.
6. *Built in Quality Assurance and R&D* for linking knowledge creation at central and local levels with their use in developing institutions and locality.

These are also the basic components for Technology Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech_MODE) (I-CONSENT, 2006 www.mkcl.org/iconsent)

Emphasis is laid on the *technological and organizational innovation* with following components for:

Technology Applications

1. *e-Networking* of providers, learners and educational functionaries and their facilities.
2. Internet use for communication and for working together.
3. Mobile Telephony and *Internet for linking* anyone, anywhere, anytime.
4. Learning Management System to manage learners and their learning.
5. Tools and *frameworks for assignment and evaluation* essential in assessment processes.
6. *Content Development* and Integration framework for creating cooperative teaching and learning products and services.
7. *Distributed Classroom* with audio graphic and video conferencing facilities.
8. Mass-personalization/customization.
9. *Meta-database* with Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) compatibility essential for personalization of curricula and content.
10. *Neural Network* to offer one-to-one training through artificially learning computer connected through networks.

Organizational Applications

1. Mobilisation of Life- long Learning Groups and L-Communities with special interests.
2. Creation of global knowledge and developmental resources and their delivery to all users.
3. Gathering local data and information for generating local *knowledge* for locality development (Approach of Wikipedia).
4. Creating processes of empowering groups and communities at local and central levels and their linkage with locality and institutional development.
5. Nurturing local and central leadership system with open, participatory and democratic processes of decision-making.

6. Creating public-private-community partnership with win-win approach for consortium building of all stakeholders.
7. Sharing and institutionalizing learning and knowledge with creation of common wealth of knowledge and educational resources.
8. Developing system for quality and excellence built in the working of individuals, groups and organization.
9. Linking outcomes with markets where products and services of the consortium could be utilized and benefits obtained.
10. Creating productive endeavors in which producers/teachers and consumers/learners participate in creating, innovating and 'marketing' together.

In order to strengthen the partnerships and consortium formation following cementing forces are essential:

- Core values, based on universal human values and ethics in the consortium and organisation such as openness, democracy, transparency, and accountability etc.
- Culture of learning and working together - for developing and sharing, with cooperation rather than competition, etc.
- Common goals of sustainable development of all partners and creating new approaches and methods for development.

Applications of technology and organization for creating network of groups, communities and consortia would form and shape society in a different organizational structure. The process of decentralization is achieved through virtualization and personalization. The program of ODL for development with local and global knowledge access for all would accelerate the march towards knowledge society faster and systematically. The processes of empowerment could be generated with interest based organisation and promotion with knowledge and technology learning and up-gradation continuously. With these processes, the society could slowly be taken to a higher level of knowledge and performance. With emphasis on ethics and morality as core values, it is possible to develop a Gandhian Model for cooperation, peaceful coexistence and sustainable development.. However, there is one major contextual difference; the whole world has to be treated as a single village in which various communities could live with autonomy and achieve prosperity. Creating such a social order is a great challenge. The approach suggested would also enable achieving quality education for all with ever increasing capability. Although these concepts and ideas are in the initial stage of formulation, there is no doubt that they lead towards the formulation of a Third Model of Development.

IT Mediated National Education System: Features

The Technology Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) (Workshop, 2005) had the following main features:

1. Distributed Education with convergence of formal, non-formal and informal modes of education.
2. Solves the problems of quality, quantity, cost reduction, and speed simultaneously. Education System for anyone, anywhere learning.
3. Mass education system with personalization—high and unlimited scalability.
4. Shift from learning for knowledge to learning for development.
5. Enables to pool best experts, quality content and services for all.
6. Enables shift from content learning to innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship development.
7. Enables to create open educational and developmental resources for personalized, customized and contextualized development.
8. Enables to create level playing field for ensuring quality education for all.
9. Creates developmental culture of cooperative learning with inclusion of core values in working together. Helps develop partnerships and new organisations.
10. Helps develop many localized and globalised paradigms and developmental models that could enable search of unity in diversity.

The National System of Education has to choose its developmental model correctly with appropriate values essential for democratic and participatory development. It would also need appropriate policy and resource support from the state if it is to succeed in bringing in people and their institutions together in their efforts to achieve sustainable development and prosperity.

Education for Our People

The Commission expected the education to become a strong force for equalization and generate quality, wide access and equality for education of Indian people. The expectation of the EC to develop such a National Education System created through Education Revolution was not realizable in the 20th Century framework. It is now possible to develop appropriate paradigms with specific value system to start Educational Revolution by employing Information Revolution. The whole approach has to be people-centric utilizing the developed consciousness of the Indian people after working with the Indian democracy for nearly 60 years. The major shift lies in emphasizing bottom- up models of development and empowerment in the society and polity with centralized power structure. The constitutional goals of creating new Indian society based on equality and justice by sharing of social, economic and knowledge powers and by creating level playing fields on which weaker and stronger would have the equal opportunity for

access and success is a great challenge for India and its educational system. The leadership and resources have to be searched, not in the existing power structure but in the democratic participation of the people. All those who are committed to the constitutional goals and vision of society should help in creating and supporting right policies and programs for people's empowerment.

National policies and strategies should support not only technological convergence, but also convergence of modes of education, help shift focus of education towards sustainable national development, help people's participation for creating common wealth of open educational and developmental resources, create networks with access to all disadvantaged and help nurture leadership from people, who would lead an Educational Revolution for developing the Indian National System of Education. The existing system of education has to undergo a radical transformation to make itself a suitable instrument for developing the Knowledge Society on the basis of equity and justice. Forming consortia at local, regional, national and international levels would be helpful in creating a change movement outside the Government but by ensuring public-private-community partnership with a win-win partnership.

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