

CHAPTER 2.3

SECONDARY EDUCATION

2.3.1 Secondary education serves as a bridge between elementary and higher education and prepares young persons between the age group of 14-18 for entry into higher education.

2.3.2 The population of children in the 14-18 age group (the age for secondary and senior secondary level education) has been estimated at 96.6 million, as projected by the National Sample Survey Organisation in 1996-97. However, enrolment figures show that only 27 million children were attending secondary schools, which means that two-thirds of the eligible population remains out of the secondary school system.

2.3.3 The number of secondary schools in India increased from 7,416 in 1950-51 to 1,16,820 in 1999-2000. However, this number is not adequate to accommodate the out-of-school children and the growing number of upper primary school pass-outs. The impact of recent initiatives undertaken for the Universalisation of Elementary Education is resulting in an increased demand for the expansion of secondary education. (Table 2.3.1)

2.3.4 There has been no fundamental change in the structure and organisation of the secondary and higher secondary education system during the Ninth Plan period since the initiation of the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986. In the wake of the Policy, several centrally-sponsored schemes were launched and national level institutions for school education were established/strengthened. Ten centrally-sponsored schemes are in operation in the secondary education sector. The experience of the implementation of the programmes as well as various reviews and evaluation studies have highlighted the need to modify and strengthen these schemes. Against a budgetary allocation of Rs. 2,603.49 crore for the sector in the Ninth Plan, the

expenditure incurred has been to the tune of Rs. 2,322.68 crore.

2.3.5 The focus in the Ninth Plan was on reducing disparities, renewal of curricula with emphasis on vocationalisation and employment-oriented courses, expansion and diversification of the open learning system, reorganisation of teacher training and the greater use of information and communication technology. Hostel facilities for girls, integrated education for the disabled, free education for girls etc. have also received attention. During this period the various Central institutes/organisations like National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT), National Open School (NOS), Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas were further strengthened.

2.3.6 The Table 2.3.1 below gives details of the growth of the Secondary Education Sector over the Plan periods.

Table 2.3.1

Number of High/Higher Secondary institutions, Students and Teachers (1950-2000)

Year	High/Higher Secondary Schools/Inter/Pre-degree/Junior Colleges	Students (in lakh)	Teachers (in lakh)
1950-51	7416	15.0	1.27
1990-91	79796	191.0	13.34
1995-96	90134	249.0	14.93
1998-99	112438	277.6	17.47
1999-2000	116820	282.1	17.20

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, MHRD, 1999-2000

2.3.7 While, in terms of absolute numbers, state financing of secondary education continued to grow

Table 2.3.2
Expenditure on Education in the Five Year Plans

(Rs. lakh)

Five Year Plans	Elementary (%)	Secondary (%)	Higher (%)	Total Expenditure
I	85(56)	20(13)	14(9)	15,300
II	95(35)	51(19)	48(18)	27,300
III	201(34)	103(18)	87(15)	58,900
IV	239(30)	140(18)	195(25)	78,600
V	317(35)	156(17)	205(22)	91,200
VI	803(30)	736(25)	530(18)	2,04,300
VII	2,849(34)	1,829(22)	1,201(14)	8,50,000
VIII	4,006.6(47)	1,538(18)	1,055.8(12.4)	8,52,190
IX	16,364.88(65.7)	2,603.5(10.5)	2500.0(10.0)	24,90,850

Note: The figures in parenthesis indicate % to total allocation.

Source: Five-Year Plans, Annual Plans and MHRD Reports.

(though it is still inadequate), financing of secondary and higher education has shown a declining trend in terms of percentage spending on education from the Sixth Plan onwards (Table 2.3.2). The share of elementary education in total spending has been increasing, reflecting the priority to implement free and compulsory elementary education.

2.3.8 Participation of the private sector (including non-governmental organisations or NGOs) in the management of secondary schools with official recognition and, in many cases, with financial assistance, has also increased. Private organisations currently manage around 51 per cent of secondary schools and 58 per cent of higher secondary schools. In order to meet the educational needs of those who have not been able to enroll themselves in the formal system, opportunities have been provided through the National and State Open Schools, utilising contact centres and multi-media packages. Distance education in the school sector also got a fillip with the National Open School was started in 1989, identifying new vocational areas and providing on-demand examination. Improvements in the content, process and quality of education, particularly environment education, science, mathematics and computer literacy have been emphasised with

central financial support available for schemes related to this. New initiatives taken after the National Policy on Education was revised in 1992 include the revision of the curriculum, setting up of resource centres for value education and a National Centre for Computer-aided Education etc. Several measures taken to enrich the school curriculum are being continued with added thrust. However, the scheme of vocationalisation of education has not appealed to the stakeholders because lack of industry-institute linkages, manpower demand surveys and various academic constraints. At present, only 10 per cent of the students are opting for the vocational stream, against a target of 25 per cent by 2000.

2.3.9 Educational development of children with special needs received an impetus with the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. The Act entrusts the appropriate governments and the local authorities to provide children with disabilities access to education, employment, preferential allotment of land for certain purposes, non-discrimination in transport, financial incentives to Universities to enable them to undertake research etc. Programmes for

attitudinal changes, capacity building among teachers and training institutions to educate children with special needs have been taken up.

2.3.10 Along with providing opportunities for equal access and ensuring a minimum level of learning achievement for all, it is equally important to nurture talented children especially those from the rural areas and those belonging to lower income group. There are several programmes for the development of talent. Residential Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas from Class VI to XII are established in the Seventh Plan as model schools and to provide quality education to talented children from rural areas selected on the basis of a common admission test. Each district is supposed to have one such school. Currently, there are 462 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas with about 1,25,000 students on their rolls.

2.3.11 The National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT), New Delhi, conducts a National Talent Search Examination to identify talent. International Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics Olympiads are held every year to identify talent in these subjects. India has been participating regularly in these Olympiads.

2.3.12 Talented students from rural areas are provided scholarships at the secondary stage in order to develop their potential by providing them access to good schools. A total of 38,000 scholarships have been awarded to students.

2.3.13 Internal compulsions and international commitments are forcing the secondary education system to gear up to meet the ever-increasing

demand for education. Initiatives such as the externally-aided District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, increasing number of schools in the private sector and the drive for elimination of the gender gap in line with the Dakar Declaration on Education for All in 2000. Concerted efforts, backed by national consensus, are called for to meet these daunting challenges.

2.3.14 The major thrust in the Tenth Plan, thus, is to meet the increased demand for secondary education. The Government has to play a greater role to encourage opening of new secondary schools, expansion of capacity of the existing schools including double shifts, upgrading of upper primary schools in backward, unserved and under-served areas, as also expansion and diversification of open schooling and distance education system. One of the many options being considered during the Tenth Plan is for the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to establish schools in partnership with voluntary agencies. It is proposed to set up 150 Kendriya Vidyalayas (fully funded by the Government) in addition to the present network of 854 schools. Another option is to provide a one-time grant/ seed money to societies, trusts and not-for-profit organisations like the R.K. Mission, the Jesuits, the DAV Trust, which already run reputed schools to encourage them to set up more schools.

2.3.15 It is proposed to establish more Navodaya Vidyalayas to cover the districts which do not have one right now and also to strengthen these existing schools by providing them facilities for cultural activities, computers and sports facilities. It is also proposed to help the Central Tibetan School

Box 2.3.1

Tenth Plan – Objectives, Key Issues and Focus

The key issues during the Tenth Plan would be a greater focus on improving access and reducing disparities by emphasising the Common School System in which it is mandatory for schools in a particular area to take students from low-income families in the neighbourhood. The Plan will also focus on revision of curricula with emphasis on vocationalisation and employment-oriented courses, expansion and diversification of the open learning system, reorganisation of teacher training and greater use of new information and communication technologies, particularly computers.

Administration (CTSA), which runs about 70 schools for children of Tibetan refugees, to set up more schools.

2.3.16 During the Tenth Plan, the National Open School (NOS) would intensify efforts to ensure that the open school system is to the under-privileged groups. A scheme to reimburse to the NOS the fees incurred on scheduled castes/scheduled tribe (SC/ST) students, girls and physically challenged students is also on the anvil. The NOS will also be restructured to affiliate regular schools/centres, which offer NOS curriculum as an alternative to the curricula of other school Boards. The nearly 1,200 study centres are proposed to be increased by around 15 per cent per year. New admissions, which are around 200,000 students a year, is likely to increase at 20 per cent per year. The NOS proposes to implement the schemes of 'On-Demand Admissions' and 'On-Demand Examinations', which give flexibility to the students to take admissions and examinations during mid-session.

2.3.17 The scheme of providing boarding and hostel facilities for girls, initiated in 1993, has already been revised in order to increase the enrolment of girls at the secondary level. The scheme provides for financial assistance to eligible voluntary organisations to improve the enrolment of adolescent girls belonging to the rural areas and weaker sections.

2.3.18 In order to make secondary education more relevant in the current context, the NCERT will continue to emphasise modernisation and revision of curriculum, updating of courses and vocationalisation of education. The Council would operationalise the fifth Regional Institute of Education for the North-Eastern Region at Shillong. The NCERT is starting the nation-wide Seventh All India Educational Survey in order to strengthen the database during the Plan period.

2.3.19 The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE) conduct public examinations at the end of Classes X and XII. Both are self-financing bodies, which do not receive any

assistance from the government. A total of 5,850 schools are affiliated to the CBSE as on 15 April 2001 and 1,119 schools to the CISCE as on 31 August 2001. The NOS is the third national-level body conducting equivalent examination at the secondary and senior secondary level.

2.3.20 As part of the zero-based budgeting exercise and in order to bring in greater effectiveness in the implementation of the central sector and the centrally sponsored schemes, the schemes of secondary sector have been grouped under following four broad heads :

2.3.21 **Quality Improvement in Schools:** This comprises the centrally sponsored schemes of Promotion of Sciences Laboratories, Environmental Orientation to School Education, Promotion of Yoga, as well as the central sector schemes of Population Education Project, International Mathematics/ Science Olympiad. The state governments would develop training modules for in-service training of teachers and provide infrastructure and research inputs for quality improvement in schools.

2.3.22 **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT):** This will include the reworked centrally sponsored schemes — Computer Education and Literacy in Schools (CLASS) and Educational Technology (ET) — which seek to familiarise students with IT. Keeping in view the current demand for IT, a major thrust is to be given to this scheme. State governments would prepare Computer Education Plans (CEP) for computer literacy and education. The components of the merged scheme ICT in Schools would include (a) funding support for CEPs; (b) strengthening and reorientation of the staff of the State Institutes of Education and Training (SIETs); (c) Digitalisation of SIETs' video and audio cassettes in partnership with NGOs; (d) web/internet-based education to be managed by the SIETs.

2.3.23 **Access and Equity:** This scheme will comprise, among other components yet to be designed, the ongoing scheme of Strengthening of Hostel/Boarding Facilities for Girl students.

2.3.24 Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC): In the Tenth Plan, greater efforts will be made to expand inclusive education to cater to the needs of mentally and physically challenged students. The scheme will continue as a separate centrally sponsored scheme and will be redesigned. It will now focus on the following elements: convergence with the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme for early interventions; with the DPEP and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for education of the mentally and physically challenged up to the elementary level; with the special schools under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Other components of the scheme will be inclusive pedagogy and curriculum, training of teachers and preparation of teaching learning material; research and development (R&D), advocacy and evaluation; and funding through the PTAs/VECs/ management committees of the schools.

THE PATH AHEAD

2.3.25 The impact of recent initiatives undertaken for the universalisation of elementary education is resulting in increased demand for expansion of secondary education. Unless steps are taken to

expand the secondary education system, it would be difficult to accommodate the increasing number of upper primary pass-outs. While there has been an increase in the number of secondary schools, the spread has been uneven; there are regional disparities and variations in the socio-economic status of various states and Union Territories. The significant gender gap also has to be narrowed down.

2.3.26 The key theme in the Tenth Plan is imparting quality education at all stages of education and the pursuit of excellence. The on-going efforts in revision of curricula at the secondary education level, so as to make it more relevant, would continue in the Tenth Plan. The convergence of centrally-sponsored schemes will help in imparting science, mathematics and, computer education as well as environmental and value education in a more focused manner. There is a line of thinking which believes that subsidising students through a 'voucher system', as is the practice in some of the Latin American countries, is more effective than 'subsidising' institutions. The students will enroll themselves in reputed schools, letting the market forces weed out the inefficient and poor quality institutions.

