
UNIT 11 ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN EDUCATION

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is a prime determinant of progress and development of a nation. Realizing the importance of education for the development of the nation, it (education) has been included in the Concurrent list of Indian Constitution in the 42nd amendment of Indian Constitution in 1976. Starting from the independence of India to till now, the Government of India is in the process of implementing numerous plans, programmes and schemes on education including most comprehensive programmes on education like Samagra Shiksha and Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan for the overall progress and development of education in India. Though regulated efforts are being made at the level of both governments as well as non government (by involving Non-Governmental Organizations) levels including general public level for promotion of Indian education. But, till now we are not successful in achieving our educational targets satisfactorily because of a number of issues and problems in our education system. Referring to these contexts, in this Unit, we will discuss the issues and concerns in Indian education with specific reference to the access, enrolment, retention, quality, and equality and equity in education along with addressing the needs of diverse groups in education.

11.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe the issues of access, enrolment, retention, quality, equality and equity in education;
- explain the intervening strategies or measures for achieving access, enrolment, retention, quality, equality and equity in education;
- define the needs of diverse groups in education;
- illustrate the different ways for addressing the needs of diverse groups in education; and
- familiarize with selected programmes and schemes that are in operation for addressing the needs of weaker sections of society in education.

11.3 ACCESS AND ENROLMENT IN EDUCATION

Access and enrolment in education remain at the threshold or beginning point of any education system. Access in education basically refers to the provision of facilities and opportunities in education. Enrolment of students in education implies admission or registration of students in education. Access is a pre-condition for enrolment in education. Access for school education implies adequate provision of school facilities for children. This provision may be defined in terms of number of schools required for the children, infrastructure facilities in the schools, location of schools in a reasonable distance from the residence of the children, adequate teaching learning facilities in the schools and so on. After arranging the adequate number of schools and facilities in the schools, the next point is to see whether adequate numbers of children are admitted or not in the schools.

The 86th amendment of Indian Constitution (2002) provides right to education to all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a fundamental right. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009) mentions that all children in the age group of six to fourteen years shall have the right to free and compulsory education till the completion of elementary education in a neighborhood school. Free and compulsory education always requires equal access in education for all children irrespective of differences in gender, caste, class, colour, race, culture, place of birth or residence, etc.

The flagship programmes like Samagra Shiksha (an overarching programme which subsumes the three schemes i.e. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teacher Education) and Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan including many other programmes of government are in operation in the country for promoting access, enrolment achievement, etc. in education at different levels of education extending from the level of basic education to the level of higher education.

There is need to increase access and enrolment in different levels of education. Appropriate provision for access and enrolment in education must be made for the students coming from disadvantaged sections with respect to their residence or location, gender, physical deformity, social and cultural background, etc. For example, a student with physical disability must be provided a barrier free institutional climate where he/she would not find much difficulty in his/her movement

and access to various school facilities. A girl child should not feel unprotected and should not be deprived from getting many benefits in an educational institution because of her gender. Many times we find students from rural areas or geographically disadvantaged/backward areas have less access to education. Their enrolment is also less. Hence, there is need to maintain parity and equity in access and enrolment in education for all categories of children.

Let us discuss some of the issues of access and enrolment in education, and strategies for enhancing its access and enrolment.

11.3.1 Issues of Access and Enrolment

A number of issues or barriers are found in the way of increasing access and enrolment in education. Here we will discuss some important issues of the access and enrolment:

Location of the institutions: Scattered settlement around educational institutions, uneven routes to educational institutions, too much distance of the residence of students from the educational institutions, etc. become the cause for decreasing enrolment of students in educational institutions.

Less number of institutions: If the supply of number of institutions providing education is less than the number of the institutions demanded for students then it hampers the overall enrolment of students. If adequate numbers of educational institutions are not established in geographically disadvantaged and remote areas, then the enrolment in education in those areas are hampered.

Poor facility in the institutions: Institutions having poor quality of classrooms, teaching learning materials, teaching learning processes, laboratories, teachers, playgrounds, sanitation, drinking water, etc. cannot attract large number of students to be enrolled in the institutions.

Poor condition of the family: In poor family, the children start to earn from their tender age to support economically to their family, and that is why they hardly attend educational institutions.

Costly education: Except elementary stage, in all other stages (i. e. secondary stage, higher secondary stage, etc.), education is a costly affair. Even elementary education in public schools is a costly affair. If education does not become affordable then it becomes out of reach of many students.

Pressure of domestic work: The children of some families like single parent family, family having old age parents, nuclear family, poor family, etc. remain busy in household works/domestic works or in earning money in many circumstances. They act as the helping hand for their family members, and therefore, they do not attend the educational institutions.

Illiteracy and lack of awareness of parents: Many parents do not value the education of their children because of their own illiteracy and lack of awareness towards education. Such parents engage their children in household activities, firms, business, etc. instead of sending them to educational institutions.

Social and cultural norms: Social and cultural norms relating to blind belief, superstition, etc. of family members affect negatively on education of the children of the family. For example, in many cultures, a boy is given preference over girl for getting education.

11.3.2 Strategies for Enhancing Access and Enrolment

In order to increase access and enrolment in education, many strategies may be adopted. Let us find some common strategies that are useful for increasing access and enrolment in educational institutions.

- Arranging proper transport and communication facilities to the educational institutions.
- Establishing the number of educational institutions according to requirement.
- Creating adequate facilities in educational institutions which include facilities of physical infrastructure (i.e. building, class, library, laboratory, furniture, etc.), teaching learning material, teaching learning process, students' evaluation and so on.
- Providing age appropriate admission facility for the out of school children.
- Establishing residential and/or mobile educational institutions wherever required.
- Providing awareness and counseling for the parents regarding the education of their children.
- Making education affordable for the students. Further, adequate funding must be given for education.
- Opening alternative modes to formal education like distance education, non-formal education, open education, etc. to meet the educational demands of those students who cannot enter into formal education.
- Making special provision in education for children of disadvantaged areas like rural areas, slum areas, mountain areas, jungles, etc.

Check Your Progress 11.1

- Note:** a) Write your answer in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with the ones that are given at the end of the Unit.

1. What is access in education?

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2. Name the schemes that the programme Samagra Shiksha subsumes.

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3. How does poor facility in educational institutions affect access and enrolment in education?

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11.4 RETENTION IN EDUCATION

Retention of a student in education generally implies a condition or situation in which the student remains/participates in a level of education or a course of learning in which he/she is admitted till he/she completes the level of education or course of learning. If a child is admitted in elementary school and leaves the school before he/she completes his/her elementary education in the school, then he/she is treated as not retained till completion of his/her elementary education. Generally, retention rate is counted on the basis of a level of education or a course of learning. The efficiency of an education system is understood to many extents through the retention of its students in the system. Retention is strongly influenced by drop out in one end and promotion in another end. Let us understand the meaning of drop out and promotion given below:

Drop out: Drop out of a student in education implies to a situation in which the student leaves a level of study or course of learning before he/she completes the level of study or course of learning. Drop out is opposite of retention. Drop out or discontinuation in education is a kind of wastage in education.

Promotion: Promotion of a student in education refers to a context in which the student successfully completes a level of study or course of learning within a stipulated time. If a student takes more than the given/stipulated time to complete a particular level of study or course of learning, then it is called stagnation. Stagnation is almost synonymous to failure. Stagnation is a kind of detention or repetition in education. Stagnation or repetition adversely affects promotion.

Mere enrolment in education has no meaning unless there is retention. After enrolled in a particular level of education (for example, senior secondary level of education), a student must be retained in it and successfully complete it in order to have his/her senior secondary education fruitful or successful. High drop out in education system makes the system failure in many extents. Higher is the dropout rate in education system, greater is the wastage in the system.

Drop out is a serious concern in different levels of education in the country. In elementary level of education, though the country followed no-detention policy for long time, but, the dropout rate of students did not reduce satisfactorily in the elementary level of education. There has been a steady decline in dropout rates in primary education since 2009-10. Between 2009-10 and 2012-13, the annual average dropout rate in primary education declined from 9.1 percent to 4.7 percent. The dropout rate, though declining from year to year, still remains a major challenge (NUEPA, 2014, p-xviii). The dropout rate is very high in secondary stage of education in comparison to other stages of education.

Dropout in education poses a threat to the education of the country. It creates the alarming situation for education by lowering down the retention in education.

Retention in education is too less among the children of poorest families, socially disadvantaged families and families of rural and remote areas. Let us find below some important issues of retention and measures for enhancing retention in education.

11.4.1 Issues of Retention

Retention of students in education is reduced because of its large number of hindering factors. Some of such factors are described below:

Institutional facilities: Lack of proper facilities in terms of classrooms, playgrounds, toilets, water supply, hostels, etc. in the institutions decreases the retention of students in the institutions. Further, lack of quality education in institutions in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, teacher competency, etc. adversely affects the retention of students in the institutions.

Institutional environment: If the environment of the institutions is hostile, autocratic and affected by narrow politics, then the students feel disturbed in such environment and this reduces the retention rate of students in the institutions. Corporal punishment to the students decreases the rate of retention of students in the institutions.

Teacher shortage and absenteeism: Shortage of teachers and high absenteeism of teachers in institutions reduce the quality of teaching learning in the institutions. Less quality of teaching learning in institutions reduces the retention of students in the institutions.

Curriculum load: Many students, especially the students of first generation and students belonging to disadvantaged sections, cannot cope up or adjust with the curriculum of the institutions in many times. When the curriculum becomes unrealistic and over loaded for students, the students cannot adjust with it and drop themselves from the institutions.

Lack of parental interest and involvement: Some students discontinue their school education because of lack of parental interest and involvement towards their education. Retention of students in higher education also to a considerable extent is determined by the interest and involvement of their parents towards their education.

Financial constraints: Poor and needy parents may not send their children for getting education because of their financial problems. Even if they send their children for getting education, but, in many cases, they force their children to leave the education before completion of the education (with respect to a particular level of education or course of learning) because of their financial constraints.

11.4.2 Measures for Enhancing Retention

Some significant measures which can be taken for enhancing retention of students in education are given below:

- Providing quality education in terms of better institutional infrastructure and environment, curriculum, teaching learning process, evaluation system and so on.
- Appointing required number of competent and committed teachers and reducing teacher absenteeism.

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- Regularly conducting parents and teacher meeting for better participation of students in education.
- Monitoring the attendance of students from time to time in institutions.
- Evaluating the performance of students continuously. Further, arranging the remedial classes for weaker students.
- Providing guidance and counseling services as well as mentoring services to students for motivating and retaining them in learning.
- Providing mid-day lunch (or mid-day meal) to students if possible.
- Making institutional climate learner friendly, secured and democratic.
- Providing multiple assistances to the deserving students in forms of study materials, text books, stipend, scholarship, dress, travelling incentive and many other incentives.
- Providing financial assistance to the poor parents through student support services in order to motivate them to send their children to institutions for education.

Check Your Progress 11.2

Note: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with the ones that are given at the end of the Unit.

4. What is promotion of a student in education?

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5. If a student takes more than the given/ stipulated time to complete a particular level of study or course of learning, then it is called-

- a) Retention
- b) Drop out
- c) Discontinuation
- d) Stagnation

6. What should be the nature of institutional climate for enhancing retention in education?

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11.5 QUALITY IN EDUCATION

The ultimate goal of any educational system is to achieve quality in the system. Before understanding quality in education, it is better to understand the meaning of quality at first. Quality is a multi-dimensional and relative concept. It has not any absolute or definite meaning. However, in many cases, it is defined as the degree of excellence of something or it denotes to the standard of a matter/material. In other words, it refers to 'how far the features and characteristics of something meet the demands of its stakeholders'. Quality is defined in terms of worth or value of something. It helps to judge good or bad features of something. An educational system is called more qualitative when it offers better education in terms of physical infrastructure, teaching learning process, learning outcome, etc.; and on the contrary, an educational system is called less qualitative when it offers poor standard of education in terms of physical infrastructure, teaching learning process, learning outcome, etc.

Quality is not merely a measure of efficiency; it also has a value dimension. The attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice (National Curriculum Framework, 2005, P-102).

Quality of an educational institution has strong impact on its students in its different parameters i.e. enrolment, retention, participation and finally achievement. If an educational institution provides quality education in terms of its better physical infrastructure (like classroom, laboratory, library, etc.), rich curriculum, better teaching learning process, student friendly evaluation, etc., then there is maximum chance for increasing enrolment, retention, participation and achievement of students in that institution. Though there are many parameters (i.e., enrolment, retention, participation, etc.) for judging the quality of an educational institution, but, the role of the parameter 'achievement' is very important in judging the quality of the institution. If enrolment is considered as first step of education, and retention is considered as second step of education, then achievement may be considered as next or subsequent step to enrolment and retention in education. Securing better achievement or success of students is the ultimate goal of any education system.

The poor performance of students in education system is because of the lack of quality in different aspects of the system. Let us see in the following sections some quality issues in education and means for enhancing the quality in education.

11.5.1 Quality Issues in Education

In our entire edifice of education, we find large number of quality issues or problems of education. Some important quality issues of education are discussed below:

Focus or objective related issues: If the focuses or objectives of education in institutions are not set in pace with current change and development in society and individual life, advances of knowledge, etc. then the quality of education of the institutions is affected adversely. Narrowly defined and unevenly set objectives of education in institutions decrease the quality of the institutions.

Resource issues: Lack of different resources in institutions like lack of adequate classrooms, laboratory, library, drinking water and sanitation, playground, sitting facility, etc. adversely affect the quality of the institutions.

Curriculum and learning material related issues: Problems in curriculum such as: unrealistic curriculum, over burdened curriculum, curriculum that includes irrelevant contents, poorly designed curriculum in respect of time and subjects of study. lower down the quality of education. If the learning materials are not supplied in time or not available in market in time, then the quality of education is also hampered. Further, supply of poor standard learning materials like poor standard text books, work books, educational aids and kits, reference materials, etc. decrease the quality of education.

Teaching learning process related issues: If the teaching learning process is not joyful and learner centered then it makes the educational process less qualitative and less effective. Large sized classes, heterogeneous classes, multi-grade classes, etc. require special pedagogical focus, and if same pedagogy is used in these classes without considering the nature of the classes, then quality of teaching learning in these classes are hampered.

Assessment related issues: Lack of continuous and comprehensive assessment and feedback of students' behaviour in education decreases the quality of education. Further, lack of individual attention to each student; remedial inputs to the weak students; and advanced exercise and task to bright students, etc. weaken the quality of the education in different ways.

Teacher related issues: Teacher absenteeism and lack of adequate number of qualified and competent teachers poorly affect the quality of education. Lack of properly motivated and committed teachers towards their profession also affects the quality of education very badly.

Management and supervision related issues: Lack of proper management of different aspects of institutions like management of time (for example, class schedule, academic calendar, etc.), material resources (for example, teaching learning materials, teaching learning aids, etc.), human resources (for example, teachers, supporting staff for teaching, etc.) and different activities (for example, classroom teaching learning, evaluation, etc.) reduces the quality of education in the institutions. Further, lack of planned supervision and monitoring of different activities of the institutions decreases the quality of education of the institutions.

Activity 1

Apart from the quality issues of education discussed above, mention what are the other issues that you consider which affect the quality in education?

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11.5.2 Enhancing Quality in Education

Some important means for enhancing quality in education are as follows:

- Increasing institutional infrastructure in terms of buildings, classrooms, furniture, learning materials, laboratories, libraries, sanitation facilities, etc.

- Setting goals and objectives of education according to the changing needs of the learners in the society.
- Bringing curriculum reforms in order to make the curriculum need based for the students.
- Adopting diversified learner centered pedagogical techniques according to the demand of the different teaching learning contexts.
- Using innovative practices including ICT based materials in teaching learning for enhancing quality in education.
- Assessing different aspects of behavior of the learners continuously.
- Appointing adequate number of competent and committed teachers and providing continuous training to the teachers according to the needs of the educational system.
- Strengthening teacher education system in the light of the changing need of teachers and teaching pedagogy.
- Providing an effective leadership and management style to the education system for effective management of different resources of education.
- Securing active involvement and support of community members in education.
- Promoting research and innovation in institutions for achieving quality in the different aspects/parameters of the institutions.
- Making the institutional climate democratic and institutional activities decentralized for overall growth and development of the institution.

Check Your Progress 11.3

Note: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with the ones that are given at the end of the Unit.

7. Describe the teacher related issues that adversely affect the quality of education.

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11.6 EQUALITY AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Equality in education refers to a state or condition in education in which all individuals or stakeholders of the education are given same kind of opportunity or treatment in the education regardless of the differences among them. On the other hand, equity in education refers to a state or condition in education in which individuals or stakeholders of the education are provided opportunity or treatment in the education according to their needs, interests, abilities or capacities, etc. Providing same education to all children is an example of educational equality

whereas providing education to each child according to his/her needs, interests and capacities is an example of educational equity. Providing the same amount of stipend to all children is an example of educational equality, but, providing the amount of stipend to children by considering their performances in learning, class or stage of study, socio-economic background, etc. is an example of educational equity. Implementing the same curriculum in educational institutions of different regions of a country is considered under educational equality whereas implementing the different curricula in educational institutions of different regions of a country according to the requirements of the regions of the country is considered under educational equity.

In some situations, equity acts as a pre-condition for achieving equality. Since equity promotes need based and fair provision of resources, so, in different ways it helps in achieving equality. In some other situations equity and equality are used synonymously. For example, when we say gender equality, practically it does not refer to treat the different genders (male, female and transgender) exactly alike rather it refers to treat them according to their needs and requirements. The needs and requirements of people of different genders are not same in all contexts. Hence, gender equity and gender equality are used synonymously.

Equalization of educational opportunity has its reflection in its different aspects/stages of education like in access or provision, enrolment or admission, process or operation and finally outcome or result. The scope of equalization of educational opportunity is not limited only in opening the adequate number of educational institutions, but, it also includes the operational aspects of the institutions or type of teaching learning of the institutions and success level of students in the institutions. In this context, the National Policy on Education (1986) emphasized that 'to promote equality it will be necessary to provide for equal opportunity to all not only in access, but also in the condition for success.

Let us discuss in the following heads the dimensions and causes of inequality, and measures for achieving equality and equity.

11.6.1 Dimensions and Causes of Inequality

Inequality in education arises when certain individuals or groups are in disadvantage situation in comparison to other individuals or groups in different aspects of education i.e. access, enrolment, processing, achievement, etc. Indian land occupies 2.4% of the entire land of the world, and India is the second populated country of the world. Landmass wise India is the 7th ranked country in the world. Indian geography is a diverse geography and Indian culture is a cosmopolitan culture. In this vast country, inequality and unity are observed together in different dimensions of individual life and society, and such inequality and unity have strong impact on the education system of the country.

Some common dimensions of difference that are remarked in India are race, religion, language, caste, class, geographical location, etc. Though, these are different diversities in our society still we consider and practice these diversities as our strength but not weaknesses. These diversities help us to bind and unite us in a single thread. Let us discuss some of the causes of inequality in education in India.

Prevailing social disparities: Narrow interpretation of Prevailing social disparities in terms of race, caste, class, culture, religion, etc. creates inequality in education system.

Gender disparity: Prevailing social customs, traditions, superstitions, etc. relating to gender affect education of people of different genders. Girls and transgender

children enjoy low socio-economic and educational positions in comparison to boys.

Difference in physical and mental ability: Children who have physical, sensory and intellectual challenges or who have disability are deprived to get adequate facilities for their education in many cases. This creates inequality in educational opportunity or attainment.

Difference in home environments: Difference in home environment creates gross inequality in educational status. For example, a child of a poor family living in slum area may not get equal opportunity in education like a child belonging to a high status family living in core area of a city. The educational aspirations and motivations of a child are determined according to his/her family background.

Standard of institutions: Children studying in high standard institutions (in terms of physical infrastructure, curriculum, teaching learning process, teacher, etc.) generally show better performance in education in comparison to the children studying in poor standard institutions. So, the difference in standard of institutions creates inequality in education.

Poverty: Huge educational inequality is created due to poverty. Poor parents cannot bear the education fees and costs of study materials for their children and because of this their children either leave educational institutions or show poor performance in the educational institutions.

Regional imbalances: All the regions of India are not equally developed because of historical, geographical, political and other reasons. Further, many differences are found between rural areas and urban areas in terms of their progress and development. Educational opportunities are found less in underdeveloped regions in comparison to developed regions.

Lack of consciousness of people: Educational inequality is created because of lack of consciousness of people towards education. Conservative attitude, false ideas, wrong beliefs and ignorance towards education create a lot of inequality in education.

Faulty educational administration: Because of corruption and nepotism in educational administration, and faulty educational administration, the inequality in education is not reduced properly. Further, improper implementation of educational schemes and policies increases the educational inequality in different forms.

11.6.2 Measures for Achieving Equality and Equity

Equality and equity in education directly as well as indirectly contribute for bringing the overall development of a nation in one hand and promoting justice in the nation in another hand. Equality and equity in education have a great role in democratizing education system of a country. The following measures may be undertaken for achieving equality and equity in education:

- Providing education to all people of the society in accordance with their needs, interests and capabilities.
- Promoting universal and/or compulsory education up to a certain level of education (for example, up to elementary level or secondary level or any other level of education).
- Providing compensatory education for them who couldn't attain a particular target level of education in an appropriate age for it.
- Implementing all the Constitutional directives of equality and/or equity in

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education. For example, implementing Article 21A of the Constitution (free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6-14 years), Article 29 of the Constitution (protection of language, script, and culture of minorities) and so on.

- Special provision in education like reservation in education, scholarship/stipend in education, etc. for weaker sections of the society like schedule castes, schedule tribes, other backward classes, economically weaker sections, minority communities, women, persons with disability, etc.
- Special provision in education for children belonging to disadvantaged areas like slum areas, remote rural areas, rough hills, delta areas, jungle areas, rough mountains, etc.
- Promoting a core or common framework of education for the people of the whole country.
- Adopting a fair and impartial policy in admission as well as treatment in all the educational institutions.
- Establishing many alternative institutions to formal education institutions like non-formal education institutions, correspondence education institutions, etc. for meeting the educational demand of the masses.
- Parental awareness must be created in order to make the parents aware to send their children to educational institutions.
- Provision/arrangement of individualized instruction, remedial teaching, guidance and counseling services, etc. should be made in educational institutions for promoting equality and equity in education in the institutions.
- The administrative system of the education needs to be reformed by removing existing corruption in the system, removing monotony in the system, developing commitment towards the system and removing narrow politics in the system.

Check Your Progress 11.4

Note: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with the ones that are given at the end of the Unit.

8. How does parental poverty create educational inequality?

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9. 'Free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6-14 years' is mentioned in which article of Indian Constitution?

- a) 15
- b) 20
- c) 20A
- d) 21A

11.7 EDUCATION FOR THE DIVERSE GROUPS

Indian diversity is unique in the whole world. India is not only diverse in its physical and geographical features, but, the people of diverse socio-cultural and linguistic groups live in India. The historical tradition, political condition, cultural scenario and other such features of India allow the people of different castes, tribes, classes, races, religions, languages, etc. to live together in India. The culture and tradition, life style, value pattern, ethos, rites and rituals of the people of India are determined to many extents by their languages, races, castes, religions, economic positions, social status, etc. Because of huge diversity among the people of India, Indian culture seems to be beautiful, cosmopolitan and multicultural.

11.7.1 Needs of Diverse Groups in Educational Setting

Within the diverse nature of Indian socio-cultural set up, many hierarchies and disparities are found among Indian people. Uneven economic distribution among the people of India characterizes economic disparity in Indian society. Schedule caste, schedule tribe and people with disabilities are most vulnerable section in the society from different fronts. Other backward class and economically weaker section people enjoy very low socio-economic and educational status in the society. There are religious minorities, linguistic minorities and many other minority groups who are in disadvantaged position in society in educational front and many other fronts. Women and girls enjoy very low social status in comparison to men and boys. Discrimination against women and girls is easily visible in home, public places and even government offices. Transgender people are only recently recognized by the Supreme Court of India (in 2014) and they also enjoy a low social position in comparison to people of other genders. Persons with disability of hearing, vision, locomotor, intellectual or developmental are unfortunately aren't treated equally like other members of the society because of their disability.

Education system doesn't function in isolation of the society. All the social issues and problems affect education system in different ways in a society/nation. For example, the participation of schedule castes, schedule tribes, other backward classes and economically weaker section people is very low in education because of their low socio-economic status in society. The access and success levels of religious minorities and other minority groups in education aren't satisfactory. The linguistic minority people face difficulty in protecting their own language and culture through education. Girls' enrolment and success in education are not satisfactory in comparison to enrolment and success of boys in education. Girls especially from minority communities, schedule castes, schedule tribes and poor families have very low representation in education. Transgender people have also very negligible representation in education. Children with disability have low participation in education because of lack of opportunities to participate in education and lack of required resources in our educational institutions. Hence, in educational system, diverse groups have diverse needs. Since the nature of problems of each group of people is unique and special, so, each group of people should be given special kind of facility and / or treatment in education for their better educational attainment.

11.7.2 Addressing the Needs of the Diverse Groups

Addressing the needs of diverse groups in educational setting is a basic condition for attainment of educational equity and justice. All the aspects of an educational setting which include objectives of teaching learning, curriculum, teaching learning

materials, teaching learning process, educational evaluation, educational environment, etc. must be designed in an inclusive style for catering diverse needs of students coming from different sections of the society. For example, the teacher should be secular while dealing the students of different religions in the class, girls should feel secured in the institution, sign language and Braille should be included as the part of curriculum and pedagogy for deaf and blind children respectively in class, etc. Remedial instruction and special coaching, mentoring, etc. may be provided to the academically weaker students. Students with disability may be given more time and assistance to complete the assigned task if they require the same. The entire environment of the institution must be inclusive for all the students coming from different family, community and social backgrounds.

Curriculum design must reflect the commitment to Universal Elementary Education (UEE), not only in representing cultural diversity, but also by ensuring that children from different social and economic backgrounds with variations in physical, psychological and intellectual characteristics are able to learn and achieve success in school. In this context, disadvantages in education arising from inequalities of gender, caste, language, culture, religion or disabilities need to be addressed directly, not only through policies and schemes but also through the design and selection of learning tasks and pedagogic practices, right from the period of early childhood (National Curriculum Framework, 2005, P-5).

For the educational upliftment of different weaker sections of the society, there are certain schemes, plans, programmes, activities, etc. that are in operation in our country from time to time. For example, Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships, National Overseas Scholarship, Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojna, Free Coaching, etc. are some schemes/programmes launched for the educational development of schedule caste students. The educational schemes/programmes that are in operation for schedule tribe students are- Eklavya Model Residential School, Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships, Ashram Schools, etc. for catering the educational interests of other backward classes, the special schemes / programmes found are- Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships, National Fellowship, Free Coaching, Dr. Ambedkar Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loan, etc. Pre-Matric and Post- Matric scholarships, Maulana Azad National Fellowship, Padho Pardesh- Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies, Naya Savera- Free Coaching, etc. are some schemes/ programmes operating for providing educational assistance to minority students. The schemes/programmes of Free Coaching, National Overseas Scholarship, Pre-Matric and Post Matric Scholarships, National Fellowship, Assistance to Disabled persons for purchase /fitting of Aids, etc. are provided to the persons with disability for their better education. The schemes / programmes like Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna, National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya (KGBV) among many other schemes /programmes work significantly for the educational development of girls. Some weaker sections of the society like schedule castes, schedule tribes, other backward classes, economically weaker sections and people with disability are provided reservation in education at the national level. Schedule castes, schedule tribes, backward classes, women and persons with disability are also provided reservation in education in some states in the country depending upon the policy of the states.

For the active and universal participation of diverse groups in education, whole hearted and continuous efforts are needed both at the government and general public levels. Every educational institution must provide adequate space and facility in its access, enrolment and participation to all categories of students with special emphasis to the students coming from weaker sections of the society. Only formulation of policies, programmes and schemes for inclusion of diverse groups in education is not enough rather such policies, programmes and schemes must be implemented meaningfully at the grass root level or client level for better attainment of equity and justice in education.

Check Your Progress 11.5

Note: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with the ones that are given at the end of the Unit.

10. Match the items given in Column-A with items in Column-B

Coloumn –A

Eklavya Model Residential School

Maulana Azad National Fellowship

Braille

Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojna

Coloumn – B

Minority students

Schedule Tribe Students

Schedule Caste Students

Blind Students

11. Write the name of any two schemes or programmes that are dedicated for the educational development of girls.

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

This unit explains about the issues and concerns in education with special reference to issues and concerns in Indian education. In the beginning phases of the unit, the different components/aspects of the issues like access, enrolment, retention, quality, equality and equity in education have been explained. In the beginning phases also, different measures or strategies are suggested which can be adopted for increasing, access, enrolment, retention, quality, equality and equity in education. In the last phase of the unit, the needs of the diverse group in educational setting as well as different ways for addressing the needs of diverse group in educational setting including some special plans, programs, schemes and activities that are in operation for addressing the needs of the weaker sections of the society in educational setting are illustrated.

11.9 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Access in education refers to the provision of facilities and opportunities in education.
2. The programme Samagra Shiksha subsumes the following three schemes:
 - a) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan,
 - b) Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, and
 - c) Teacher Education
3. Poor facility in educational institutions affect access and enrolment in education because institutions having poor quality of classrooms, teaching-learning materials, teaching-learning processes, laboratories, teachers, playgrounds, sanitation, drinking water, etc.
4. Promotion of a student in education refers to a context in which the student successfully completes a level of study or course of learning within a stipulated time.
5. (d) Stagnation
6. The nature of institutional climate should be learner friendly, secured and democratic for enhancing retention in education.
7. The teacher absenteeism and lack of adequate number of qualified and competent teachers poorly affect the quality of education. Lack of properly motivated and committed teachers towards their profession also affects the quality of education very badly.
8. Poor parents cannot bear the education fees and costs of study materials for

their children and because of these, their children either leave the educational institutions or show poor performance in the educational institutions.

9. (d) 21A

10. **Column – A**

Column – B

Eklavya Model Residential School

→ Schedule Tribe Students

Maulana Azad National Fellowship

→ Minority students

Braille

→ Blind Students

Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojna

→ Schedule Caste Students

11. a) National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL), and

b) Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya (KGVB)



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