UNIT 3 : SECONDARY EDUCATION

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3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- describe the problems of secondary education;
- identify the ways to solve the problems of secondary education;
- explain the need of vocationalisation of secondary education;
- describe the ways of making secondary education vocationalised; and
- develop an understanding about the medium of instruction in secondary education.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Secondary Education plays an important role in the educational systems of India. It is the link between primary and higher education. It has, therefore, a vital role to play in preparing the pupils for colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning. Besides, it is the stage, which in all countries, marks the completion of basic education for the vast majority of students. Even those who might join higher education in future, cannot take full advantage of the wider opportunities offered by the universities unless they receive a proper grounding through secondary education. So, the system of secondary education in the country must be of the highest quality, if it is to satisfy the needs of the modern age. Following India's Independence, there could be seen remarkable improvement in scientific and technological education and research. Yet, the rate of illiteracy in India is still very high. But, in recent times, remarkable changes took place in the field of secondary education. The Government of India, soon after Independence, appointed a number of committees and commissions to review the system of secondary education as there was an urgent need of reorganising secondary education of the country. However, the system of Secondary education of India is not without its problems. In this unit, we shall discuss some of those problems as well as its remedies. We shall also explore the ideas of vocationalisation of secondary education as well as the medium of instruction in the context of Secondary Education in India.

3.3 PROBLEMS AND REMEDIES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

As with other stages of education, secondary education (from class IX to XII) of our country also has many problems which usually pose challenges for the growth and development of secondary education. The problems as well as the possible remedies of secondary education are described below:

3.3.1 Problems

1. **Aimlessness:** The existing secondary education system suffers from aimlessness. It would not be improper to remark that the aim of education in Independent India is similar to that of Pre-independence India. Generally, education is acquired with the aim of getting employment in future. However, despite being educated, millions of students are still out of any job.
2. **Defective curriculum:** The curriculum of secondary schools is unsuitable because all students have to study one prefixed curriculum. They do not get the opportunity to select the subjects according to their interest and desire. Besides this, their curriculum is not related to the environment and practical life. It is observable that many political, economic and social changes are taking place in the country but our education in general and secondary education in particular have failed to keep pace with the changes. The curriculum does not appear to be related to practical life. The pupils study the traditional curriculum, without any interest, understanding or appreciation. Their immediate aim is to get through the examinations.
3. **Indiscipline:** Indiscipline is yet another major problem of the present day secondary education. It is not proper to accuse only the students of being indisciplined. In fact, the present educational system, examination system, aimless education etc., are also the factors responsible for the indiscipline seen among the students. Sometimes, indiscipline may increase to such an extent that it might jeopardise the whole education system. There are however different causes of indiscipline such as Loss of higher spiritual values, Political changes, Defective mode of examination, Wretched economic condition of teachers, etc. According to Prof. Humayun Kabir, “If education trains the future citizen, it also determines the shape of future society. The value of such education depends upon the

character and competence of the teachers who impart it, that is why, the rate of society depends on the quality of its teachers. It is no exaggeration to say that incompetent and dissatisfied teachers undermine the very foundation of society."

4. **Defect in Instructional Programme:** The methods of teaching followed in the Indian schools are stereotyped. The instructional programme is so hackneyed and mechanical that it hardly infuses in the young minds the spirit of enquiry, self study, practical experimentation and love of work. These only encourage cramming and do not develop the capacity for self enquiry and reflective thinking.
5. **Low standard of teaching:** Low standard of teaching is also one of the chief problems of secondary education. The Government has concentrated mostly on the expansion of education and has not devoted proper attention towards the qualitative progress through education. Unless the teachers are given proper facilities and respect in society, the situation will not improve. Besides this, there are many schools which do not have sufficient funds to make the proper provision of building and other necessary things connected with education. These shortcomings have also adversely affected the standard of teaching.
6. **Defective examination system:** The prevailing system of examination in secondary education is full of defects. There is the domination of matriculation examination over the whole secondary education. At school, teachers and students are tested in accordance with their success in the examinations. But, examination is not the real test of knowledge gained by the students. According to S. N. Mukerjee, "Worse than India's community ridden, social and political system is her examination-ridden educational system. In fact, the matriculation examination dominates the entire work of our secondary schools. The prestige of the schools depends

entirely upon matriculation results and very little on real educational merits of the institution."

7. **Absence of community life:** There is absence of well-organised community life in the secondary schools of the modern period. The main reason for this is that sports and games, excursions, physical exercises, social activities, etc., which may establish close contacts among the students, are not organised in the schools. Besides these, there is total absence of religious and moral education in the schools. Thus, the schools of modern times have just become factories whose main aim is to make the students pass the examination.
8. **Lack of Vocationalisation:** For many years, the secondary education system in the country has remained unchanged. Neither there is diversification in its curriculum nor has it given any importance to vocationalisation. The form of curriculum which was fixed by the British Rulers keeping in view their own interest generally continues to be the same even today.
9. **Wastage and Stagnation:** Like primary education, secondary education of our country also faces the problem of wastage and stagnation. It is observed that there is a premature withdrawal in the secondary education as most of the students are not regularly promoted to next higher class. These two aspects of secondary education are two great hurdles in the attainment of universalisation of secondary education.
10. **Dearth of Trained Teachers:** Another pivotal problem of secondary education is dearth of trained teachers. The changing needs of time have demanded that teachers should be professionally trained. Newly appointed teachers may be professionally trained but a large number of senior teachers are not professionally trained.

3.3.2 Remedies

With regard to the solution of the problems of secondary education, the following measures may be suggested:

- In order to make secondary education successful and effective, it is necessary to first determine its aim. So long as the aims of this education are not properly outlined, its utility will continue to be doubtful. Now, the question is what should be the aim of secondary education? The first and foremost requirement for this is that secondary education should be made an independent unit and not complimentary to higher education. Thereafter, secondary education should have the following aims:
  i) To make the students skilled in some work after completion of their education;
  ii) To increase their professional and productive power;
  iii) To achieve social and national integration; and
  iv) To accelerate the process of modernisation.
- In order to remove the defects of the curriculum, it is necessary that the curriculum should be learner centred and activity centred based on work experience and life experience. It should be functional and practical in nature. The curriculum ought to be hybrid mixture of general and vocational education. The needs and environment of the locality should be properly kept in mind.
- In order to remove the wide spread indiscipline among the students; we will have to give proper attention to the factors which are responsible for such growing indiscipline. This herculean task can be achieved only when the Government, people and guardians jointly take active and constructive measures in that direction.
- The teaching methods in secondary education should be modified along with theory and practicability, apart from work

experiences, co-curricular activities and dynamic method of teaching like project method, excursion, exhibitions, experimentations, use of library, seminar, discussion, workshop and so on.

- The standard of teaching can be raised by taking into consideration many factors which have been mentioned earlier. The Government should appoint inspectors who would make their contribution by providing necessary supervision and suggestions. Besides, the teachers should be sent to training colleges from time to time in order to acquaint themselves with the latest teaching methods. It is also necessary that only enthusiastic persons and the persons wishing to dedicate themselves for the service of the society should be selected for teaching jobs. They should also be encouraged from time to time by giving them rewards for their meritorious work in this connection.
- There is a need to make radical changes in the system of examination. Evaluation should be made on the basis of essay and objective type of tests. Apart from written examination, oral examination should also be held. Special emphasis is given on continuous and comprehensive evaluation in secondary education.
- Secondary educational institution should provide training in community life. For the all round development of a child's personality, there is need to provide opportunity of working together. Hostel, library, play-ground, tours, cultural programmes help to develop corporate life among students. The Mudaliar Commission has rightly remarked, "School is a small community within a large community and the attitude, values and modes of behaviour which have currency in national life are bound to be reflected in the school."
- Different types of vocational subjects and crafts should be included in the curriculum of secondary education. It should

create interest among the students to go to school. It also develops employment opportunities for future life of the students. Regarding Vocationalisation of secondary education, The Secondary Education Commission (1952-52) remarked, "Secondary education should be vocationalised in a large measure and enrolment in vocational course rest to 20 percent of total enrolment at the lower secondary stage and 50 percent of total enrolment at the higher secondary stage by 1986."

- Proper expansion of secondary education is not possible without minimising the problems of wastage and stagnation.
- Government training centres for secondary school should be established to train the teachers at lower cost. Again, in-service training facilities should be made available in different training centres to enhance professionalism among the teachers.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1: Mention one of the problems of secondary education.

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Q. 2: Mention any one way of solving the problem of examination in secondary education.

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3.4 VOCATIONALISATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Education is regarded as the process of improving human excellence. Generally, education is sub divided into two categories i.e. general or traditional education and vocational education. The second category i.e. vocational education is related to the head-hand coordination of the individuals. It is associated with the technical aspect which is different from general education.

3.4.1 Meaning of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education

The meaning of vocationalisation of education can be explained from two perspectives. Firstly, it is training in some specific vocation and secondly, it can also be seen as the combination of general and vocational education. The first view implies learning of the trade, skill of a vocation or occupation so as to enter the world of work just after the successful completion of a particular course. But, according to the second perspective, vocational training, in this narrow sense, is not correct. Such educational courses must also include general education, besides providing training in the specific vocation so as to train the practical aptitudes of students in the preparation for definite vocational work later.

The UNESCO report (1974) defined vocational education as a comprehensive term embracing those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Such education would be an integral part of general education, a means of preparing for an occupation and an aspect of continued learning.

In the words of S. P. Chaube, “By vocationalisation we mean that vocational subjects should also be given place in the curriculum of general subject in such a way that the students after completing their general education become competent to earn their living. It should be particularly noted that by Vocationalisation of education we do not intense to make the child carpenter, an artisan, a weaver, a goldsmith or businessman or producer of some articles. By this education we only mean to give a self dependence to the student in life afterwards. At the same time, by the vocationalised education we want the development of the total personality of the child.”

3.4.2 Need of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education

Secondary education can inculcate positive attitude towards individual and social-economic life in the minds of the students. The importance of vocationalisation of secondary education can be realised in terms of the following points:

- **Economic Self-sufficiency of the Students:** Some people apprehend that vocational education in school degenerates into liberal education. But, if they look to its practical aspect, they will realise that in addition to the usual course of studies, vocational education helps the students to become economically self sufficient. As a result, they develop self-confidence, moral strength and mental freedom.
- **Educative Efforts become Purposeful:** A child is motivated to learn, when it is engaged in a purposeful activity. Secondary stage of education is a terminal point in the life of many students. When the child knows that the education he/she gets will help in post-school adjustability, he/she learns more efficiently. It is vocational education, which helps the child in his/her post-school adjustability and stimulates his/her capacity for observation and arouses his/her thoughts and feelings.
- **Solution of the Problem of Unemployment:** Those who are educated in the general curriculum at the secondary level are less likely to be employed later if they do not achieve higher education. Even if you get a bachelor's or master's degree with a low score, you will not get any benefits. Rather, the number of educated unemployed increases. Therefore, providing vocational education at the secondary level will help in self-employment in future.
- **Only Hope of the Children with Lower Intelligence:** The pressing problem at the secondary stage of education is: how to teach the students having lower intelligence. A large number of school-going children leave schools quite early and get ready

to face the grim realities of struggle. Thus, they are deprived of any opportunity to prepare themselves for a career. To help these children, education at the secondary stage, should be vocationalised.

- **Bridges the Gulf in the Society:** Liberal education in India has increased the social distance between the elite class and the masses. Those who get liberal education develop a superiority complex and look down upon the masses who get vocational training. In order to bridge the gulf between the elite class and the masses, education at the secondary stage should be vocationalised. Introduction of the 10+2+3 pattern of education and the Socially Useful Productive Work (SUPW) programme in the emerging Indian society aim at making education uniform throughout the country.

3.4.3 Steps of making Secondary Education Vocationalised

India is passing through a transitional phase. The country has a number of developmental plans. Now, there is a tendency to convert the unilateral schools into multilateral ones. To give secondary education a vocational set-up, the following steps should be undertaken:

- **Diversification of Secondary Education Curriculum:** The Government of India appointed a number of Committees and Commissions with the aim of reorganising secondary education. The diversification of the curriculum has been made on the basis of the recommendations of these Committees and Commissions. With the introduction of this system, the roads for the all round development of the students will remain wide and open. They will find an opportunity to study subjects according to their individual abilities, aptitude and capacities. To facilitate the students to choose their subjects according to their own sweet, diversification of the curriculum is the best means.

- **Opening of Multi-Purpose Schools:** Before the Independence, the students had to study all subjects compulsorily. As a result, the natural tastes and aptitude of the students were neglected and the study of prescribed curriculum was forced upon them. With the dawn of Independence, steps are being taken to convert secondary schools into multi-purpose schools. If this becomes successful, we can enable the students to study subjects of their choice and make the best use of their talents and energy. We can also enable students to acquire proficiency in some vocational subjects so that they can get an opportunity to get self-employment.
- **Provision of Guidance and Counselling:** To enable the students to choose vocational subjects according to their interest and aptitudes, guidance and counselling process should be introduced in the secondary schools of the country. This will help students make the best decisions in their personal, educational and vocational life.
- **Introduction of Work–Experience:** Work-experience is directly related to productivity. The entire scheme of Basic Education is based on that principle. Its purpose is to relate education to productivity. It can work as a greater force for vocationalisation of the secondary education. A scheme for providing well-graded work experience programme with scientific base should be introduced immediately in all the secondary schools of India.
- **Manpower Needs should be carefully studied:** Acute technical manpower shortage in some industries is a profound problem in our country. Therefore, we should carefully study the manpower needs of our country and accordingly include vocational subjects at the secondary stage.
- **Proper Planning:** Without proper planning, the programme of vocationalisation of secondary education cannot be

successful. Therefore, emphasis should be laid on proper educational planning.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3: What is meant by vocationalisation of education?

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Q. 4: Mention one step of making secondary education vocationalised.

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ACTIVITY 3.1

How can vocationalisation of secondary education be addressed the issue of unemployment in rural Assam? Discuss the issue with some educated persons of your locality and write a report on it in 500 words.

3.5 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

The medium of instruction is always a controversial topic in the context of Indian education. It is true that language plays a pivotal role in the education systems across the country. Language is the most systematic way of communication among human beings. There will be no existence of the educational system without language. Secondary education plays an important role in the socio-economic development of a country. The main purpose of such education is to develop good citizens. There is always a big debate with regard to the medium of instruction for secondary education. Different Commissions like Secondary Education Commission of 1952-53, Education Commission of 1964-66 etc. suggested different formula for the medium of instruction in secondary education. It is always debatable whether English, Hindi or Regional Language as a medium of instruction is suitable.

The following is a discussion on the suitability of English, Hindi and Regional Languages as the media of instruction.

3.5.1 English as a Medium of Instruction

There are different pros and cons for English as the medium of instruction. These are mentioned below:

Arguments in Favour of English:

- English is used across all countries. Hence, it can help in better communication among the people of all countries.
- The most effective and popular language of the world is English. A huge number of literatures are published in this language. Hence, English has the better advantage over all other languages.
- The English language helps to develop international understanding among the masses by removing regionalism and conservatism.
- National level competitive examinations give more emphasis on using the English language to maintain uniformity. Hence, English language should be applied as the medium of instruction.
- English language is so rich that it can also be utilised for making the regional language up to the level of international language. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt English language.
- English is a dynamic language. If the Indian mind and imagination have to remain dynamic, the flow of new ideas from progressive countries is bound to be an influencing factor in shaping our thought process.

Arguments against English:

- By sticking to the English language, students might ignore their own local language/s.
- The problem of wastage and stagnation in education occurs mainly because of the English language. As the training in the use of the English language is not proper, a large number of

students fail in examination.

- People gradually stay aside from their own culture and tradition after taking English as a medium of instruction.
- The regional languages will be neglected completely if everything runs through the English language.
- English language is not helpful in bringing the democratic feeling in the citizen of our country.

3.5.2 Hindi as a Medium of Instruction

There are certain arguments for and against Hindi as the medium of instruction in secondary school. They are:

Arguments in favour of Hindi:

- Constitutionally, Hindi is our national language. Therefore, it can be said that this language will play a very special role in our lives.
- Hindi language is very simple and easy to communicate. It will definitely help in the inter connection between the states.
- To provide equal educational opportunity, Hindi must be used in all the competitive examinations.
- Hindi is the only language which can develop the feeling of national unity among the students.
- To maintain uniformity among the states, Hindi must be used as a medium of instruction.
- The introduction of Hindi will bring uniformity in our education system and avoid the complexities of multilingual system.

Arguments against Hindi:

- As a language, Hindi is a very poor language compared to English. It can be associated with some other regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Tamil etc.
- Hindi has no political or administrative tradition, because throughout Indian history, there has never been a Hindi state.
- There is no special advantage in substituting Hindi for English.
- Hindi is not a link language for the education patterns across

India.

- There may be inter-state conflict if Hindi is taken as the medium of instruction. It is because; the Hindi speaking areas will dominate over the non-Hindi speaking areas.

3.5.3 Regional Language as a Medium of Instruction

Regional language plays a useful role in the education of a child. The pros and cons of using regional language as the medium of instruction are described below:

Arguments in favour of Regional Language:

- Regional language is the best medium for the expression of one's ideas and feelings. Student can exchange their ideas more effectively through their mother tongues.
- It is through language, and especially through the regional language, that individuals form themselves into a social organisation.
- Of all the languages, the regional language is most easy to learn. Full proficiency or mastery can be achieved in one's own regional language. Students' achievement in their examinations is comparatively higher than those who opted for English as the medium of instruction.
- Intellectual development is impossible without language. Reading, expressing oneself, acquisition of knowledge and reasoning are the instruments for bringing about intellectual development; and all of these are best possible only through the regional language of the child.
- We may be able to communicate in any language, but creative self-expression is possible only in one's own regional language.
- Regional language is the most important instrument for bringing about emotional development of the child.
- Original ideas are the product of one's own regional language. On account of the facility of thought and expression, new and original ideas get shape only in one's own regional language.

Arguments against Regional Language:

- Regional language is not properly developed enough to support the development of the region.
- There will be no scope for the students to move abroad if regional language is the medium of instruction.
- The international understanding will also be affected by the inclusion of regional language.
- Adoption of regional language will cause pain for the linguistic minority group.
- There may also be problem for the students who want to study in some other states.

Hence, it may be argued that only one language cannot be the medium of instruction in secondary education. For that reason, in our country, the three language formula is adopted as suggested by the Education Commission of 1964-66. The three language formula is referred to as Hindi, English and the regional languages in a particular region.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 5: Provide one argument in favour of regional language as the medium of instruction.

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3.6 LET US SUM UP

- Secondary education has a vital role to play in any programme of education for the community. It prepares the pupils for colleges and universities and other institutions of higher learning.
- The main problems of secondary education in India are—aimlessness, defective curriculum, indiscipline, defect in instructional programme,

low standard of teaching, defective examination system, lack of vocationalisation and dearth of trained teachers, etc.

- Vocational education is a comprehensive term embracing those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in the various sectors of economic and social life.
- The medium of instruction is always a controversial topic in the field of Indian education. It is true that language plays a pivotal role in the education system. In a country like India, the three language formula may be very effective.



3.7 FURTHER READING

1) Aggarwal, J.C. (2014). *Development and Planning of Modern Education.* Noida: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.

2) Dash, B. N. (2007). *Teacher and Education in the Emerging Indian Society (Vol-II).* New Delhi-Hyderabad: Neelkamal Publications Pvt. Ltd.

3) Jayapalan, N. (2005). *Problems of Indian Education.* New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.

4) Kochhar, S. K. (2004). *Pivotal Issues in Indian Education.* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited.

5) Thakur, A.S. & Thakur, Abhinav (2014). *Development of Education System in India: Problems and Prospects.* Agra: Agrawal Publications.



3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1: Defective curriculum: The curriculum of secondary schools is unsuitable because all students have to study one prefixed curriculum. They do not get the opportunity to select the subjects according to their interest and desire.

Ans. to Q. No. 2: Special emphasis is given on continuous and comprehensive evaluation in secondary education.

Ans. to Q. No. 3: Vocationalisation of education is a comprehensive term embracing those aspects of the educational process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understandings and knowledge relating to the occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Ans. to Q. No. 4: Diversification of curriculum is one important step to make secondary education vocationalised.

Ans. to Q. No. 5: Regional language is the best medium for the expression of one's ideas and feelings. Student exchange their ideas effectively through it in the teaching-learning process.



3.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q. 1: Define Vocationalisation of education?

Q. 2: Why is Vocationalisation of secondary education important?

Q. 3: What do you mean by the three language formula?

Q. 4: Give the arguments against regional language as the medium of instruction.

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q. 1: What are the major problems of secondary education in India? What practical suggestions can you offer to solve them?

Q. 2: It has been observed in recent times that the general result of H.S.L.C. examination in Assam is better in Assamese medium schools than the English medium schools. Give your own views in this regard.

Q. 3: Discuss the merits and demerits of using English as the medium of instruction in secondary education.

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