

INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE 1970'S

by

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P R E F A C E^x

This is one of twelve volumes representing the culmination of a major effort begun by the India Field Office of the Ford Foundation several months ago. At that time, a staff decision was taken to have the Foundation's Program Advisors,* with the maximum interdisciplinary involvement of the entire Foundation Program staff, engage in a mind-stretching exercise. Our objective was to look at India in the 1970's and to do so without regard for any role or relationship for the Foundation. Ours has been and continues to be a quest for understanding India as a culture and as a nation committed to socio-economic equality and social justice.

If we are to achieve our objectives of gaining understanding about India's development prospects in 1970, we clearly need help from our Indian friends. One of the volumes, "Poverty in India", was especially prepared for the Foundation by Professor V. M. Dandekar, Director, Indian School of Political Economy, Poona, for inclusion in this series. While all the other papers were prepared by the Foundation staff, they have the benefit of considerable informal interaction with Indians.

In our quest for maximum understanding of India as it moves into the decade of the 1970's, we are now sharing these twelve volumes with a very small circle of Indian colleagues. Through this sharing with our Indian friends, we hope to further true up our own thinking and thus better anticipate India's major problems and priority needs for the future.

In addition to this volume, the other eleven volumes on India in the 1970's are :

- Volume I. "India and the 70's" - An Overview by Dr. Douglas Ensminger
- Volume II. "Poverty in India" by Professor V. M. Dandekar
- Volume III. "Indian Agriculture in the 1970's" by Dr. A. A. Johnson and staff
- Volume IV. "Agricultural Development in India in the 1970's" (1) by Dr. Martin E. Abel
- Volume V. "Water Use and Development in India in the 1970's" (2) by Donald A. Williams
- Volume VI. "India's Family Planning Program in the 1970's" by the Family Planning Staff
- Volume VII. "Some Key Economic Policy Issues in India in the 1970's" by Dr. Martin E. Abel
- Volume IX. "Indian Politics, Policy and Public Administration in the 1970's" by Edward A. Kieloch
- Volume X. "Human Resources Development and Utilization in the 1970's" by George Tobias

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- (1) Made available, by request, for publication in the March 1970 issue of Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.V. No. 13, under the title, "Indian Agriculture in the 1970's. "
- (2) Made available, by request, for publication in the June issue of Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. V. No. 26 under the title, "Water Management in the Seventies".

- Volume XI. "Indian Urban and Regional Planning in the 1970's"
by C. Preston Andrade
- Volume XII. "Trends in Indian Culture in the 1970's" by
Arthur Isenberg

Douglas Ensminger
Representative in India
New Delhi, July 21, 1970.

INTRODUCTION:

This paper is divided into two major sections. A brief description of each section follows:

- I. THE NATURE OF THE INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM describes briefly the institutional structure and the scope of formal education in India. It restricts itself to the institutional aspects of education and does not attempt to deal with the much broader concepts of the family, the village, the mass media and other components of the social context and their educational influences on the individual. Some comment on problems and issues is included in this section as background for understanding the nature of the schools, colleges and universities, which serve India at the close of the 1960's.
- II. FACTORS WHICH WILL INFLUENCE INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE 1970's discusses a number of economic, social and political forces which are operating in India at present either to change education or to hold it in its present shape. In general these are factors recognized by Indian critics or analysts of education as well as those whose perspectives come from outside India.

Analysts of education in any society can be divided (with some oversimplification) into two schools of thought. There are those who see educational institutions as a significant means of producing social change and influencing economic development. They argue that education can take the lead in moving the society forward, in altering its institutions, and in shaping a planned future. Those who in 1966 wrote the Report of the Education Commission, "Education and National Development" fall in this category. They believe that through influencing the human resources of the country its educational institutions can lead India to a modernized society and economy. Their report was intended as the blueprint for Indian education in the years ahead.

On the other hand, there are those analysts who see the educational arrangements in a nation as closely connected to all the other cultural and historical factors. "The values that clothe an education system", says Van D. Kennedy of the University of California, "are the values of the surrounding culture, and the system's most characteristic features are likely to be expressive of conditions in that culture". This viewpoint in its extreme form (not held by Dr. Kennedy) argues that education is essentially a conservative institution which tends to preserve past values rather than to change them and to reach for the future.

The assumption on which this paper rests is that both poles of this argument are wrong. Education can be changed and can change its social surroundings. But as soon as positive efforts to create such change are initiated they set up tensions within education and within the society, tensions which can become so great as to be destructive of changes made in the name of progress. Educational change, therefore, must pay some attention to the strength and pervasiveness of old institutions and to the readiness of the society for the alterations educational change intends.

I. THE NATURE OF THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM:

As in the U.S.A., the so called "education system" of India has only a few of the attributes of what we usually mean by the word "system". In a "system" the several parts have a close relationship one to the other, and change can be introduced on an orderly basis by using these interlocking relationships to produce the desired results. Often a "system" has the characteristics of being rather completely planned both to establish relationships and to produce results. In India the past history and current status of institutions of education at all levels gives them only a cloudy resemblance to being systemic. The sources of decision making, planning, and control for India's schools and colleges are found in a loose series of inter-relationships among Ministries of Education in the States, the Union Ministry of Education and Youth and its subsidiary bodies like the University Grants Commission, planning authorities at the central government and state levels, district and local educational authorities, and a large and influential private sector controlling a variety of institutions. Education in India has its local, state and national politics, which infuses the loose system with both life and controversy.

It is not easy, therefore, to introduce change through the top of the system (the Ministry of Education) and produce results in the schools and colleges. Yet it is not impossible to do so, and both the Ministry and its several related agencies like the University Grants Commission, the All India Council on Technical Education, and the National Council of Educational Research and Training are possible avenues for both planning and implementing change. But since the system is a loose one at best, they will have little effect without strong cooperation from either state agencies or specific institutions or both.

✓ A second characteristic of Indian education emerges when it is compared with the education systems of other developing countries.

When India became independent in 1947, it already had a substantial education program in operation through a combination of British initiatives and those of various private groups. Although the schools and colleges of India in 1947 enrolled only 3 to 4 percent of the population, they were already producing a level of literacy (estimated at 15 percent) and an output of trained persons well beyond that of many countries which have more recently taken on the burden of independence and self-government combined with economic development. Today with some 13-14 percent of its total population enrolled in educational institutions, India operates an education establishment larger in enrollment than that of the U. S. A., which has about 30 percent of its people in school.

The existence of a considerable education enterprise in 1947 and its rapid expansion in the first 20 years of independence have been an advantage to India in serving the needs of economic, social, and political development for both general literacy and trained manpower. But in another sense they impose a handicap. The schools and colleges inherited from British days reflected to a high degree the 19th and early 20th century patterns of British education with their emphasis on elitism, on a prescribed syllabus and external examinations, and on broad general education to equip individuals for the civil service. These influences still persist in India although there have been many changes and even more recommendations for change (see 1966 Education Commission Report). The point is that the restructuring of education to serve the needs of a democracy with socialistic economic views has the double problem of building a new system and changing a well established old one which has deep roots in past customs and practices. Some of these roots go to pre-British days and reflect emphasis on the humanities and on elitist education provided by gurus to male Brahmins through study of the religious classics.

A third characteristic of education in India is its great diversity in origin and in control of policy and practice as well as in institutional structure and institutional quality. Elementary and secondary schooling under the constitution is reserved to the states, which maintain school programs as different as are those of Mississippi and New York in the U. S. A. A large sector of secondary education is privately controlled and publically financed. For example, in Maharashtra,

✓ much of secondary education is of this kind. There are some differences among the Indian states in organizational arrangements for education than there are among the states of the U. S. A., where the pattern of twelve years of schooling before college is quite general. In India some states award the school leaving certificate after ten years of schooling, some after eleven, and several after twelve.

Higher education is equally diverse. The states operate the institutions which train teachers for the elementary and secondary schools, and with assistance from the center they sponsor the States Institutes of Education, which are agencies for improvement of teacher training and curricular reform. There are four central universities supported entirely by funds from the national government and a new one, Nehru University, in the process of formation. Other universities, however, are predominantly supported by the states while receiving some University Grants Commission (UGC) funds for construction and for launching new programs. Yet the colleges, which are affiliated with both types of universities, are to a large extent under private auspices. Many colleges reflect the special caste and communal groupings in Indian society. Others have a religious origin, and some of the strongest are the result of Christian missionary activity during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Paradoxically, the missionary-founded schools and colleges are now among the most elite institutions in India largely because they have kept the English medium of instruction.

Recent developments in higher education include the launching of 172 new "Junior Colleges" by the State of Andhra Pradesh. Now that these have been started the Ministry is engaged in searching discussions about what a Junior College should teach and to whom.

The agricultural universities on the one hand and the five Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT's) on the other are unrelated to the UGC and draw their support directly from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education respectively. Particularly the IIT's receive major financial aid from outside India. Both these types of institutions provide a break from the old tradition of Indian universities focussed on general academic training and on research activity selected for its interest to academicians rather than its relevance to the problems of India.

They are concerned with modernization of agriculture and technology and with all the side effects these developments will have on India.

The 14 Rural Institutes of High Education started in 1956 as a national effort to create a type of higher education which would be relevant to rural life, have their own special governing body within the Education Ministry. The expectation at their founding was that they would expand in number and influence and help to transform rural India by training people who could serve in many areas of development. The hope has not been realized, and they remain a backwater of higher education.

In recent years India has developed a large number of rather specialized higher education institutions to provide both research and training in selected areas related to economic, political, and social development. A number of these are degree granting institutions and are "deemed to be universities" by the UGC. Examples are the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Bombay and the Indian Agricultural Research Institute at Delhi.

This sketchy background leaves out many institutional aspects of education in India. For example the 1960's have seen considerable effort to introduce vocational education by starting specialized institutions known as Industrial Training Institutes (ITI's). There are special centrally supported and run schools for the children of civil servants and other schools for the children of railway workers. And there are numerous schools claiming some special purpose or tradition ranging from Gandhian principles on the one hand to providing training for the sons and daughters of the now defunct Maharajas on the other.

✓ A fourth significant characteristic of India's education system is its size, and closely related to this is its rate of growth. The Indians say that next to China they have the largest education system in the world. They may well be right. According to published figures, they had 69 million students enrolled in 1965-66, and they claim approximately 80 million today. As noted later in this report, these numbers are probably exaggerated, but the point is still valid that Indian education is both very large and growing rapidly.

Whatever the absolute number, growth at all levels has been rapid and will continue in the future. The Education Commission pointed out in 1966 that half India's population was below the age of 18 and that by 1985 there would be some 170 million students enrolled in schools and colleges.

The reasons usually assigned for this growth are: 1) India's runaway population expansion, which now adds about 13,000,000 new people per year and will probably accelerate from year to year in the 70's; 2) the declared commitment of both state and central governments to achieve universal education and their allocation of increasing but inadequate resources to this end; 3) the aspiration of individual Indians for more education as the avenue to upward social mobility and individual opportunity,

The reported facts of India's recent educational expansion are impressive. In 1947 only 35 percent of children attaining the age to enter school actually enrolled. Today's Ministry of Education estimates are that close to 80 percent enter Grade I. At the time of entrance to middle school (11 years of age) the comparable figures are 12 percent in 1947 and about 30 percent today. Yet tremendous demands remain to be met. About 70 percent of the population remains illiterate, and because of the growth in population, there are some 60 million more illiterates today than there were in 1947. In addition, the quality and the relevance to the needs of India and her people of much of India's educational growth is highly questionable. What seems to have happened is that efforts to maintain quality or to change education in a way to make it servicable to the new millions receiving it have been lost in the rush to enroll added numbers.

Higher education institutions have expanded dramatically also. There are twice as many institutions in the university category today as there were in 1960, and the number of colleges affiliated with universities has grown by about 1300 in the same period (today there are about 80 universities and institutions "deemed to be universities" and some 2800 colleges). Yet many of the graduates emerging from these institutions either cannot find jobs in the specialities for which they have been trained or have been improperly trained to take the kinds of jobs which exist. There is, for example, a well

recognized over-supply of engineers which will be increased considerably during the Fourth Plan Period (1969-73).

Expansion of numbers has, of course, been accompanied by expansion of financial support from both private and governmental sources, but in a comparative per student sense the support of education has declined since independence. The Education Commission estimated that from 1947 to 1966 enrollments grew by 185% and expenditures by 175%. India's education system, and any changes which are planned for it must keep the realities of this fact in mind. Although large added funding may be put into it, there seems little possibility that significant gains can be made in per student expenditures in the face of growing enrollments. The largest percentage of expansion is likely to be in the more expensive areas of secondary and higher education even though good planning would indicate investing more heavily in primary schools and slowing the growth rate of colleges. These facts combine with the enrollment problem, and with India's general lack of resources available to meet its social needs, to perpetuate the necessity for very low cost education programs.

These brief comments on four aspects of India's education system: (1) its non-systematic character; 2) its inheritance from the past; 3) its diversity; and 4) its size and rate of growth leave out many points which must be kept in mind by anyone seeking to promote useful change in the system.

Listed below in very brief form are some additional observations:

- 1) Only in very recent times has India seen its education system as a universal effort to serve the economic and social needs of all its people and to make democracy work. While universal education is now supported in theory, both economic problems and an elitist heritage conspire to make it difficult to realize. This disparity between theory and practice will continue into the 1970's.

- 2) Gandhian concepts of Basic Education have had considerable influence on Indian education but have been discredited in recent times because they seemed antagonistic to modern economic development. Yet a good argument can be made that the Gandhian view of connecting education to the realities of daily life (if separated from the attachment to obsolete crafts) is what is needed to make the schools of rural India, where 80% of the people live, serve the people and the economy around them.
- 3) The Fourth Five Year Plan for India is going into effect in 1970 after being in the process of reformulation and adoption since 1967. Its broad position on education, launching India into the decade of the 70's, is worth noting. Its targets and plans for evaluation reflect a preoccupation with numbers to be enrolled as opposed to considerations of improved quality, or of more effectively relating education planning to manpower planning, or of other approaches which might be politically unpopular.

II. FACTORS WHICH WILL INFLUENCE INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE 1970's.

At the beginning of the 1970's it is not hard to identify a number of influences on Indian education which will continue to operate in the years ahead. Some of these, like enrollment growth, have already been discussed in the foregoing description of the system and will be elaborated somewhat here. It should be clear that these pressures are of two kinds. Those which call for: (a) change or expansion or new kinds of services to new groups of people; and (b) those which in a sense are negative. The latter category includes such elements as the examination system which inhibits educational experimentation and curricular change to meet new needs in a changing society. What follows is a listing with brief discussion of each item of some selected influences to which the schools and colleges will be responding during the 1970's.

- 1) The aspirations of people to join the small but growing Indian middle class will be a constant disturber of the status quo in higher education and to some degree in secondary education for the foreseeable future. These aspirations have already outrun the demands of the economy for many categories of trained people. As the result of this pressure, India's colleges almost doubled in number in the last ten years. Enrollment growth is now bringing to the colleges large numbers of students from backgrounds which provide little readiness for higher education. This trend will continue, particularly if India persists in its admirable effort to keep a proportion of places in colleges for women and for students from the scheduled castes. The pressure of aspirations for more education requires colleges to serve students whose deprived backgrounds invalidate the usual academic procedures and demand adjustments of the kind that many American colleges have attempted in recent years to serve the Negro student. In addition, this same pressure creates tremendous problems of quality, of supply of adequate faculty, and of adequate facilities. Since independence there has been a ten fold increase in students entering colleges of arts, science, and commerce. The problems which stem from pressures to expand the education system will continue in the 70's and will, most likely, influence India to set numbers ahead of quality for that decade in higher education. The Education Commission recommended in 1966 that there be an effort to slow the growth of higher education and improve its quality, but the Parliamentary Committee that studied the Commission's report did not accept this recommendation and opposed selective admissions to both secondary and higher education as recommended by the Commission.

- 2) Population growth has its most immediate effects on the elementary schools, but its implications for the secondary schools and for higher education are also very great. It is a multiplier for the pressure of numbers on limited resources. With about 40 percent of the country's population 15 years of age and younger and with child mortality rapidly declining while India struggles to get all its children into primary school,

education planners face an almost impossible set of problems. Perhaps because the future looks so bleak, they take an overly optimistic view of population control measures in the years ahead. But there appears to be no rational basis for optimism and some reason to expect the 70's and 80's to be India's years of massive population growth. In such a situation, even proposals that are far out and highly speculative such as mass-media instruction may deserve consideration and intensive research, since the outlook for the usual methods of education is equally unpromising. In addition, ways should be sought in which the education system can be used as a means of ameliorating the population problem. "Population education" is one suggestion. The schools might contribute to population control efforts.

Of course population expansion is only one aspect of India's growth problem in education. The other is the aspiration for universal education. Actually there seems to be good reason to believe that India has made less progress in this direction than its official figures indicate and that the 1970's will be a time of continuing effort to get children enrolled in school and staying in school long enough, at least, to achieve literacy. A. K. Sen of the Delhi School of Economics in his Shastri Memorial Lectures delivered in March of 1970 argues convincingly that the official figures for enrollment in school are highly inflated and suggests that the actuality may be as low as 57% of children of primary school age enrolled as compared to the 80% claimed by the Ministry and the Planning Commission. He argues that the real facts won't be known until the 1971 census and expresses the view that the "picture is a lot less rosy than we would imagine".

- 3) Language problems and changes in the medium of instruction create a constant pressure on the quality of education as well as on its capacity to become an integrating force for India's diverse society. English is on the way out in education except as the language of international and post graduate scholarship, and the trend is toward regional languages in higher education to match their current use in the elementary and secondary schools. Needs for good materials in regional languages at all levels of education

are very great and will increase radically in the colleges in the years ahead. The need for effective methods of teaching languages (both Indian and Western European) is more and more apparent as is the inadequacy of present language instruction in both schools and colleges. There is a growing awareness of these needs in the Union Ministry of Education and some effort to meet them through allocating resources to the states for developing materials in regional languages. The Central Institute of Indian Languages in Mysore is the major organizational effort to get at problems of language teaching generally. It has started only recently, and the 1970's will tell the story of its usefulness.

- 4) As in any country, economic development in India makes a call on the education system. During British days, with relatively little effort going into changes in productive capacity, the major demand on education for Indians was to produce clerks and other officials to man the civil service, and in a sense the education offered in those years with its general academic orientation was vocational in nature. It trained in the kinds of skills the British needed to run the railways, the district governments, and other elements of the administrative system. But the years of independence have seen major efforts to promote economic developments of all kinds. These changes have called forth educational change in the form of agricultural universities, technological institutions, management training programs, industrial training institutes, apprenticeship programs, a largely unsuccessful effort to develop multi-purpose schools and other arrangements to meet the manpower needs both of the government and the private sector.

Yet an over-all perspective could well argue that a primary characteristic of Indian education is the persistence of the old pattern of general education to meet the requirements of the civil service at a time when both government and private industry require an increasing diversity of specialists for a variety of vocations. As in any country, the patterns of education have been slow to change. There is in India today almost universal agreement among educational leaders of the need to re-orient both schools and colleges to an occupational emphasis more attuned to current economic development than the inherited educational patterns. The pressure to "vocalize" education seems likely to persist and to grow more demanding, although

a counter-pressure must be recognized based on the desire of rising social strata to avoid having their children shunted into vocational courses leading to low level occupations while the children of the elite monopolize the ladder to white collar careers. Within the effort to vocationalize lies a great opportunity for Indian education to become more useful to modern India, but the details of what to do and how to do it remain elusive.

One response to the pressure of economic development has been that of setting up new specialized institutions to provide particular elements of training or research or both to meet particular needs. Perhaps it has seemed easier to create technical institutes, new management institutions, and all kinds of special non-degree granting institutions to provide the needed services than to adapt the colleges and universities or the schools to providing them. Whatever the reason, it would appear that the creation of all these new arrangements is a factor in insulating and isolating both secondary and higher education from the realities of India's changed economic, political, and social circumstances. It can be argued, therefore, that an increasingly important task is to build connections between what is taught and learned in the schools and colleges of the country and the needs of the country for people with particular interests and skills.

Particularly in the universities (with the exception of the IIT's and the agricultural universities) there has been little tendency to have both teaching and research reach toward the real and practical needs of the country. Apparently this is an Asian as well as an Indian characteristic of universities if one can believe the view expressed by Tarlok Singh, former member of the Planning Commission, at the Asian Workshop on Higher Education at Hong Kong in August of 1969. He pointed out that universities in Asia and in India " have not reached out and applied themselves to the problems of the great majority of the people. " Therefore, he charged "they have become a major factor in increasing economic and social inequalities within society".

He would like to re-orient them to the service of society. He closed his remarks with the following observation:

"We cannot but be aware that we are in a period which calls for a swift pace of change and for continuing change from within as a principle of life itself. Nor can we forget that on the whole, in our countries in Asia, universities and institutions of higher education have leaned on the side of establishments, and have yet to take their due share in the reshaping of social values and goals. For this reason, in many different ways, they are coming under sharp questioning not the least from their own students, the younger members of their faculties, and the general community. By redefining their role in economic and social transformation and re-examining their methods and scope, universities and institutions of higher education have the opportunity of giving creative meaning to the educational process, but also of leading the movement of society as a whole to new and vital goals. "

This insulation between education on the one hand and economic and social reality on the other no doubt contributes to the problem represented by the thousands of educated unemployed and under-employed. Some observers feel that schools are becoming more and more irrelevant to jobs. While the modern urban sector can't absorb the products of education, education continues to be largely unrelated to the rural sector, where the vast majority of people live and will continue to live for some time to come.

This same argument can be broadened beyond purely vocational or occupational concerns to advocate the need for including within general education some elements which will inform India's citizen-to-be about the country's problems. For example, a secondary school graduate in India today would not be aware as a result of his education that India has a population problem.

Indian education's connection with economic development raises issues of improving the quality of rural education and of developing an occupationally oriented education in rural areas. The current

plan of the GOI to identify and develop "rural-urban growth centers" may become significant in relation to these issues. These centers would act as service/market centers between the village and the metropolitan areas. The rationale for encouraging the development of such centers is basically two fold: (i) as agriculture modernizes there will be increasing need for locally based agro-industries, for fertilizer, seed for various other distribution agencies and for farm implements servicing units on the one hand and larger, more efficient processing, transportation and marketing facilities on the other; (ii) life in the large urban centers is already so congested that the possibility of providing - not simply jobs - but a reasonable quality of life to future additional urban dwellers is particularly slim. The growth center areas represent, conceptually at least, places which will provide employment, needed services, and the potential for maintaining a physical environment which yields to inhabitants a reasonable quality of life in terms of employment, health, sanitation, housing, education, and other services.

The education system should be considered a vital component of the "growth center idea". It can be viewed as a major mechanism through which those attitudes of mind can be developed which would enable the young to perceive the advantages and opportunities of rural and semi-rural living as opposed to life in metropolitan centers. At the same time, the education system can help develop in citizens the necessary skills which would make individuals more easily trainable for the kinds of occupational opportunities which are likely to emerge in the growth center areas.

- 5) Indian education has not lacked for thorough studies of its problems and extensive recommendations for change. The following list of major reports is included for anyone who wishes to look into the background more deeply.
 - a) 1944 Sargent Report on Post War Educational Development in India.
 - b) 1948-9 Radhakrishnan Report on University Education
 - c) 1951 - Kher Committee Report on primary education

- d) 1953 Secondary Education Commission.
- e) 1964 Committee on Model Act for Universities
- f) 1966 Report of the Education Commission.

The disturbing aspect of all these careful efforts is that they have produced so little change in the educational system. The Indian propensity to make plans and do nothing about them is probably over-advertised. To the degree that this is a reality, it must be regarded as a pressure which prevents educational change. The major Education Commission Report of 1966 is an example of planning without consequences. By advocating everything, it results in little action. It exemplifies a hazard which lies in wait for any program supported by aid-giving agencies and which depends on extensive follow-through after planning. Probably this lack of follow-through in India is not as much a tendency to avoid action as it is a response to contending simultaneously with a myriad of pressing problems on all fronts each making claims on scarce resources. In a sense, therefore, inaction on carefully thought out recommendations indicate a weakness in the planning process and particularly a weakness in the links between planning and political decision making. Examples of this are numerous, but perhaps the most evident in the area of education is the frequently declared intention on the part of planners to slow the growth of higher education and enhance investment in primary schools. It just doesn't happen.

This paper is not the place for a detailed analysis of planning in India even if the author were capable of providing it. But it does seem clear that during the 1970's the processes of educational planning at the state level are going to be one of the keys to progress in education. A paper by Ajit Kumar Singh, an economist at the University of Lucknow, entitled "Planning at the State Level in India" and published in January of 1970 offers a useful introduction to the general problems of planning in the States. He documents their lack of suitable planning machinery, their tendency to do unrealistic planning, their shortage of trained personnel, and a variety of other difficulties. In a country with as many calls on

its limited resources as India has, the luxury of moving ahead on social programs without disciplined examination of alternatives (a luxury typical of the United States) is simply not acceptable.

If India in the 1970's could focus on a type of educational planning which demands realistic appraisal of resources available and tasks to be undertaken rather than wishful thinking, it could be a most constructive decade. George Tobias of the Ford Foundation staff, in a paper on Education Planning for Malaysia gives a succinct definition of the type of planning which is needed.

" The essence of planning is to calculate prospectively available but limited resources and to assign them among alternative competing claimants in a balanced system, so as to assure that a desired result is produced at the lowest possible cost. Planning is the process of making choices explicit and as explicitly excluding alternatives which are less urgent or are beyond the capacity to realize".

- 6) In higher education, demands for change in the 1970's will come from a number of sources already placing pressure upon institutions and upon planning agencies at the state and national levels. Enrollment and its consequences have already been mentioned. Among other factors are the following:
 - a) The rise in student activism and politicization of campus affairs will make new demands on the administration of colleges and universities.
 - b) Contrasts between the more modern approaches to administration, admissions, and instruction found in newer institutions like the IIT's, the IIM's and the Agricultural Universities and the deeply encrusted traditional systems characterizing the large number of colleges and universities are likely to become increasingly evident. These contrasts can become either a force for further isolation of the traditional institutions or a lever to move them toward more modern practices.

- ✓ c) Young and able faculty members, particularly at the traditional institutions, are going to be less and less willing to accept the medieval tyranny of department chairmen and the inadequate fumbling of archaic administrative apparatus. They will become a growing force for change or they will join the brain drain in even larger numbers than they do today. They will see the present system of university administration as "rigid, centralized, and dominated by senior professors and administrators", to quote Prof. S. Kannappan of Michigan State University.
- d) In the 1970's it will become increasingly clear that higher education has not used its ability to analyse itself, and in some fashion or other Indian education will respond to the need to have social scientists, management experts, and behavioral scientists looking at the affairs of its universities and colleges in the light of their respective disciplines. Also, the universities have not contributed much to the developments in the lower levels of the education system to encourage modernization of curriculum or to focus research on child development or on the effects on the capacity for learning nutritional deficiencies among young people. Interests like these are just beginning to develop in the universities. Hopefully they will expand in the 1970's.
- e) The examination system so forcefully criticized by the University Education Commission in 1949 and in the 1966 Education Commission Report will continue to survive in the 1970's largely because of the economic self-interest of those who prepare, those who conduct, and those who mark the examinations. As such it will be a dead hand on all efforts to improve quality in higher education except in those few places with leadership imaginative enough to make a meaningful break from its strictures on quality and change. Particularly in connection with the examination system, the comment of Amrik Singh of the Inter-University Board of India and Ceylon will continue to have relevance:
✓ } "The real lack is not that of knowledge but of the willingness to make a break with the past. "

- 7) The "educated unemployed" will be an increasing concern in the 1970's as their numbers grow and as their political activity mounts. While aspirations for education will continue to add to their numbers, there will be a growing effort to try schemes which will absorb their energies. The National Service Corps, now being launched, may grow in significance, although it has serious problems of focus and organization. In addition there is the possibility of special programs to absorb these young people into teaching roles in the schools, which are currently the largest single source of employment for college students, although regarded by many as the employment of last resort because of the low wages.
- 8) There is a possibility of a new awakening in the social science disciplines in India in the 1970's. With the exception of economics, they have been weak and ill supported compared to the sciences. But now that the problems of economic and social development are clearly problems of people and their attitudes rather than just problems of capital and technology, the sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, and social psychologists would seem to have a potentially important role in fashioning the future. New organizations like the Central Institute of Indian Languages and the Indian Council of Social Science Research hold considerable promise for the seventies. But the key question to be answered is, how can the social science departments in the universities be changed so that they are engaged in quality work in important areas of concern? Unless they are modernized, the new central organizations will have no base from which to draw strength.
- 9) There seems little likelihood that the discoveries of nutritionists, psychologists, and others regarding the significance of the early years in child development will have any appreciable influence on Indian education in the 1970's as they have in the last two decades in the USSR, Scandinavia, Israel, Holland, and recently in the U. S. A. Perhaps outside the formal education structure and with particular attention to nutrition some progress will be made. It seems unrealistic, however, to expect schools to start worrying about three and four year old children when they can't take in the six year olds.

- 10) For elementary and secondary education the recommendations produced during the 1960's will probably be the guidelines for change in the next decade. Most frequently heard among these is the idea of making the schools more occupationally oriented and diversifying their curricula to provide links to economic enterprise whether industrial or agricultural. The most recent thinking on this subject points to the so-called "Vocational school fallacy" which dominated some education programs of developing nations in the 1950's and calls for a new kind of rapport between the schools and the economy. Instead of advocating expensive vocational schools to teach specific skills, this view advocates that all schools teach the normal learning skills through subject matter which has some familiarity to the student because it is part of his environment. This approach argues, for example, that the normal processes of farming offer unusual opportunity for learning arithmetic if properly arranged for the purpose and that a great deal of science can be learned while finding out how the internal combustion engine works. And in learning to read, the argument runs, it may make sense for young Indians to learn about job opportunities or better ways of farming.

Whether the 1970's will see any massive changes in the rapidly growing and undersupported schools is hard to predict, but it is not unreasonable to expect some lively experimental projects. They will be more successful if they can demonstrate that education which opens up occupational opportunities can also keep the door open to college. This will be difficult, because the examinations impose some of the same rigidities on the schools that they do on the colleges.

- 11) People who have some perspective on Indian attitudes toward assistance from abroad are currently finding a growing sensitivity on the part of Indians toward that assistance - a sensitivity which will be a factor to be reckoned with in the 1970's. This sensitivity has been clearly evident in feelings about American research scholars and their activities in India.

At the least, Indians are seeking real research collaboration rather than the role too often accorded them in the past of playing second-fiddle to the American researcher. In its extreme form this sensitivity speaks of "academic colonialism" and has a "Yankee Go Home" flavor. Visas of visitors with scholarly interests are being more closely examined. The Danforth Foundation has found its access to India officially circumscribed. There is a growing tenderness about other-country supported programs which reach into policy related areas. There seems to be a feeling that Indian government agencies, at the Center at least, are not as willing as formerly to have suggestions made to them about improvement and change in their educational institutions and policies. They recognize their need for assistance and particularly for funds to provide either equipment or expertise which can be bought only with foreign exchange, but they made it quite clear that they want to define their needs and make requests for meeting them rather than to be told what their problems are and how to solve them.

This very understandable shift probably reflects an admirable pride and self-confidence. It also reflects the fact that there is a growing generation of younger Indian intellectuals who are rapidly taking over and who intend to call the shots for their country's educational development.

There is a growing will to be selective about the types and sources of external help. This is coupled with a growing capacity to resist outside aid because of the increased competence in India to deal with development problems. This combination of factors may be unique to India among the developing countries and a result of (i) the large Indian higher education establishment; and (ii) the significant assistance given by foreign agencies to provide overseas training and experience to many competent Indians.

The new politics of India contributes also to the shift of attitudes described above. No longer does the writ of the Congress Party run throughout the country. Commitments made at the Center by Congress oriented officials to accept the assistance of foreign sources are more likely to be questioned in Parliament or criticized in states where Congress has lost control. For example, it is

clearly more difficult for other country agencies to assist with economic and social change in West Bengal than it was a few years ago.

What agencies from outside India are experiencing today in this new nationalistic sensitivity is the problem of doing business with Indian agencies which present no consistent viewpoint toward foreign aid activities. There are committees of the UGC some of whose members welcome help from outside agencies while other members want to steer clear of foreigners, even if they have money. This ambivalence of attitude reflects the contending viewpoints found among Indians, some of whom value advice and funds from abroad, some of whom want funds but not advice, and some of whom want no relationships at all. These conditions dictate the need for caution in negotiations and special tact and consideration in carrying out programs. They are conditions very different from those found in developing countries with less sophistication among educational and political leaders.

These feelings on the part of Indian policy makers, educators, and researchers combined with the change in the political atmosphere are going to affect the style and perhaps the substance of all foreign aid to Indian education in the 1970's.

There are several results they may have particularly for private assistance agencies: 1) It may be easier for such agencies to achieve initiatives with private Indian groups like the Indian Sociological Society than with governmental agencies; 2) they may find it advisable to work more vigorously with state officials and place somewhat less reliance on the Center, particularly in the realm of elementary and secondary education; 3) they can expect to have rather direct requests for specific items from government agencies and they may find it more difficult to negotiate about the details of these requests than heretofore.

- 12) Political factors will, as always, influence Indian Education in the 1970's. It seems certain that the pressure to enlarge college enrollments will express itself politically where such expression is

necessary to meet the aspirations for B. A. and M. A. degrees. A good example of this is found right in New Delhi which is controlled by the Jan Sangh Party. The University of Delhi has expanded far more rapidly than its plans recommend or preservation of quality would suggest as wise. Underlying this expansion is the politically expressed demand that this presumably national University serve also as the city University to a rapidly growing metropolis of some four million people. No doubt similar pressures for university expansion operate in other areas of India.

An unknown for the 1970's is the extent to which the mass aspiration for education at the primary and early secondary levels will achieve some political expression which might result in changing the focus of political pressure for new education investments away from the college and toward the primary schools. At the present time there is relatively little political demand for primary schools. As the Union Minister of Education, V.K.R.V. Rao has noted in comments to the State Ministers of Education on May 2, 1970, the Chief Ministers of the various states have felt free to reduce the allocations for education in the Fourth Plan. Prof. Rao urged the State Ministers to "create public opinion and bring political pressures on the Chief Ministers so that funds are obtained for the implementation of the constitutional directive for free and compulsory education for children up to 14 years of age". Rao added that " he would join them in their campaign in the state capitals".

How much political support the Ministers of Education might stir up for larger budgets is a question one can only speculate about. But it seems to many observers that an unorganized aspiration for education exists among the masses and Prof. M. N. Srinivas in his paper "Education, Social Change, and Social Mobility in India" refers repeatedly to the tremendous latent demand for education among millions of Indians who see it as the way "to improve their economic condition to rise higher in the social scale" and "to emancipate themselves from the tyrannies and indignities of the local caste system". If these feelings about education were to become organized in the 1970's, Indian education could change radically through the commitment of vast new resources to it.

This listing of factors which will influence Indian education in the 1970's is surely far from complete. But at least the items mentioned above will require the attention and thought of both Indian educators and those from outside India who wish to assist them. To attempt to set educational priorities for India's attention in the 1970's is no task for those from other countries. India will have to steer its own course in responding to the multiple demands made on its educational institutions by a modernizing economy and an impatient populace. But if an outsider with limited perspective may make a suggestion for the top priority tasks of the next ten years, there are three which seem to lead all the rest :

- 1) The effort to make educational planning at all levels disciplined in its thinking, realistic in its selection of new tasks, and rigorous both in its examination of alternative courses of action and its commitment of resources to those selected.
- 2) The effort to re-orient teaching and research at universities so that they address themselves more frequently and more vigorously to the issues with which India struggles every day - the issues of poverty, of over-population, of communalism, of living with the effects of moving people from a life in the 15th century to a life in the 20th all in the space of a few years of independence. Unless the universities can explain, analyse, and prescribe for the real tensions of this most complex and rapidly changing society, they will become not very interesting curiosities when they should be independent and involved analysts of India's emergence on the world scene.
- 3) The effort to connect primary and secondary education to some other set of values than those inherent in passing examinations and moving further up the prestigious educational ladder. In a land where most people won't get beyond primary school in the next ten years, it becomes pertinent to ask "What can primary school do to help people lead more rewarding lives and to ask further what can secondary school do for that large proportion of young people who enter its doors but never receive its final accolade, the School Leaving Certificate. Are all these young people

to be regarded as failures? Or is the education system to be regarded as an irrelevant arrangement which fails to serve them? ".

If India could move forward on these three fronts in the 1970's, these could be exciting years both for India and for the rest of the developing world, which might find an example worth emulating. After all, India is the largest free nation in the world. When it moves forward it carries with it a large share of the hopes of all mankind.
