CHAPTER – V

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

5.1.0 Introduction:

The chapter gives a detailed analysis of the research finding followed by interpretation of the same. This analysis and interpretation of findings are made in this chapter with the help of application of different qualitative methods of data analysis on the collected data taken from secondary source. After studies of various Books, Articles, Journals, Reports and Internet the researcher has analyzed the information and interpreted for result. In present study the researcher has used documentary survey technique. Documentary survey is used to find significant the recommendation various commissions and committees in West Bengal.

5.2.0: Analysis of Data and Interpretation of the Result:

The details of analysis of data and interpretation of the results are given below -

5.2.1 Study the recommendations of various Committees and Commissions with regard to the change of School Education in West Bengal since independence.

- **The Secondary (Dr. B. B. Dey) Education Commission, 1954.**

Secondary Education should be the responsibility of the State. All the differences between aided and unaided schools should disappear and all

schools should be under the control of the Director of Education. There may be a few independent schools which may not want any State aid; these also will have to satisfy the basic requirements for recognition. Regarding the future set-up of school education, the committee has recommended that there should be five years' primary or junior basic schools, three years' junior high school or senior basic school and four years' higher secondary school where English and Bengali will be the two compulsory languages throughout the Secondary School course. For classes VI to VIII, Hindi will be compulsory language and for classes IX to XII, a classical language or Hindi or a foreign language or Additional English will be compulsory. The medium of instruction in the High School will be the regional language but in the, two top classes of higher secondary schools, XI and XII, the medium of instruction may be English. The committee also recommended that the Managing Committees of Secondary Schools should be reconstituted on a new basis, avoiding as far as possible elections and the Headmaster should be the ex-officio Secretary of this Committee. In case of girls' schools, there should have a preponderance of women members in the committee and all schools should be registered under an Act of the Legislature.

There should be one Inspector responsible for inspecting not more than 50 High Schools in the year. Every school should be inspected thoroughly at least once a year. All schools should be provided with school kitchens

for the cooking and supply of wholesome food to every pupil during tiffin hour for a small charge again every school should arrange for suitable extracurricular activities and for teaching at least one craft. The committee also recommended that the higher secondary schools should be multi-purpose in character with technical, trade, commercial and other courses. To develop the quality of education in rural areas especially, due attention should be paid to the recruitment of teachers in such schools. As per the recommendation of the Committee, the lowest qualifications of a teacher in a Secondary School should be the possession of the Intermediate or the Higher Secondary School Certificate, and a diploma in training. And the Headmasters will be selected from a panel by a Central Selection Committee and their pay will be guaranteed by the Government to bring over all development, the Committee recommended that, national cadet corps, scouting, physical training games and leisure time activities for students should be introduced in all schools and the teachers should maintain a record of progress and attainment of each student in their classes.

- **The Primary (Prof. Himangshu Bimal Majumder) Education Syllabus Committee, 1974-79.**

In the year 1974 West Bengal State government formed The Primary Education Syllabus Committee under the chairmanship of Prof. Himangshu Bimal Majumder and in 1979 the Committee recommended

that, English should be abolished from the primary level of education up to Class - V.

- **The Education Commission 1992 (Ashoke Mitra):**

The changes that have taken place in the educational scenario of West Bengal since 1977 are striking in more ways than one. Turbulence in schools, colleges and universities has disappeared, examinations are held more or less according to schedule, the practice of unfair means in examinations has been largely checked, the payment of salaries and retirement benefits has been regularized to a considerable extent, the recommendations of two successive Pay Commissions and the University Grants Commission have paved the way for generous increases in the levels of emoluments and other benefits for the teaching and the non-teaching staff of educational institutions. The outlay on education registered a ten-fold increase between 1976-77 and 1991-92 in absolute terms; the real rate of increase is more than 300 per cent. This has been accompanied by a pronounced shift in overall allocation in favour of primary and secondary education. However, an overwhelmingly large proportion of the educational outlay is earmarked to meet the commitment of salary and wages for the teaching and the non-teaching staff. In case of both the primary and secondary education, as much as 95 per cent of the total outlay goes to pay the emoluments. Between 1976-

77 and 1991-92, the number of primary schools has increased by 10,080, of secondary schools by 569, of higher secondary schools by 879. The number of students at the primary level has been increased by more than 80 per cent, at the secondary level by 17 per cent, in the higher secondary level by more than 370 per cent. While school attendance has generally improved in town and country, for both boys and girls the phenomenon of drop-outs persists, and a lot of ground still needs to be covered to remedy the situation.

There is a serious lack of minimum infrastructural facilities in schools. The number of one-room schools is high; so also the number of one-or two-teacher schools. The quality and the method of teaching have much to be desired. One of the most significant decisions in the post-1977 period is the abolition of teaching of English as a second language. Another important change is the abandonment, at the primary stage, of the system of promoting students from one class to the next higher one on the basis of results of annual examinations. While the growth of secondary education is significant, school inspection has thinned out, and no alternative procedure of evaluating teaching has yet evolved. The stress in primary education should henceforth be on an - across the board improvement in school buildings and in other basic facilities such as the supply of meals and apparels, and equipment like books, maps, globes,

blackboards, etc. The panchayat bodies should be invited to participate in an intensive, time-bound programme of building low cost school structures with the help of local resources. The supply of free books at the beginning of each academic year should be ensured in primary schools and the practice of supplying new books to some children and old books to some others must be discarded. To enrich the standard 0f primary education, steps should be taken so that no primary school teacher is permitted to engage in any other occupation, profession or economic activity. For each block, there may be a formal body, consisting of representatives of the *panchayat samiti,* the District Primary Education Council, the District Inspectorate of Schools and at least two eminent retired teachers of the area, one of whom should preside over it, to monitor and supervise the quality and content of teaching in schools. A village-level education committee may also be formed consisting of village elders and social workers interested in the problems of rural education. The District Primary Education Council should organize district-level intensive training, conceivably of a month's duration, for primary school teachers. It may be made obligatory that a teacher, at the end of every five years, joins a refresher course, again of one month's duration.

The system of school inspection should be revived and restructured. The actual inspection should be done by representatives of the district inspectorate who may be accompanied by a senior or retired teacher from the area. It will be desirable to have at least two inspections during a year. Arrangements may be made to supply primary school children with a modest meal prepared in a community kitchen run under the auspices of the village-level committee. Here too, efforts should be directed toward raising a part of the total expenditure, say, one-third, from local contributions. Similar arrangements may be attempted for the free supply of apparels to girls from poor families attending primary schools. Primary schools must provide scope for sports and physical education as much as for such other recreations as community singing. In urban areas, a number of schools, reasonably close to one another, may evolve an arrangement whereby they share a common playground.

The ultimate objective of school education in the State is to to implement the Directive Principle of State Policy concerning elementary education, and to universalize facilities, universalize enrolment and universalize retention. Irrespective of whether funds continue to flow from the Centre, the State government should continue with the campaign for 'total literacy'; the outlay called for is of an insignificant order in the context of the results achieved and achievable. The limited success of the literacy

campaign among women and in the tribal areas may be attributed to the lack of an adequate number of voluntary instructors from amongst Muslim women or with a tribal background. These problems require to be looked into. For the purpose of post-literacy and continuing education, the establishment of hundreds of reading centres, approximately at the rate of three reading centres for each gram panchayat, may be considered. Such centres may be run by the neo-literates themselves entirely on a voluntary basis, through committees elected by them. The State government as well as voluntary agencies could be requested to distribute free of cost reading matters to the panchayat bodies for being passed on to the reading centres. The government may bear the cost of subscription of one newspaper for each reading centre as also the cost of renting a room for it. For affecting any radical departure in secondary school education, the passive method of instruction, where the stress is on burdening the student with a load of information mechanically communicated, has to be replaced. The curricula and syllabi should be restructured with attention shifted to the challenge of problem-solving. The syllabi for secondary education should be so redrawn as to provide for options, such as self-employment or vocational training or pursuit of further general education. The higher secondary education course should also be remodeled and diversified. To meet the shortage of both duly qualified teachers and infrastructural facilities, the system of school

clusters may be tried out. Three, four or a larger number of neighbouring secondary schools may be grouped together to form a cluster. A major shift in the outlay on secondary education should occur in favour of institutions in the rural areas. Priority has to be on filling up the more glaring gaps in the opportunities for secondary education in the interior of several districts.

The Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Higher Secondary Education should immediately undertake a joint review of their curricula and syllabi. The syllabi at the higher secondary stage should be weightier than those at the secondary stage, but the nature of the extra weight must be in consonance with the length of effective teaching time. A distinction should be made between 'subject load' and 'teaching load'. The syllabi for the higher secondary stage should be compatible with the corresponding ones in other States, so that the students of this State are not at a disadvantage at national level contests and competitions, these should, at the same time, have a relevance to West Bengal's problems and requirements. Since secondary and higher secondary stages are the intended points of departure for by far the largest number of students, the curricula and courses should be so formulated as to enable them to be equipped to join a variety of professions as well as to emerge as responsible citizens aware of their duty and obligations to society. The

minimum pass marks in the secondary examinations should be raised in stages to 40 per cent for each individual subject and 50 per cent in the aggregate. Schools ought to fix an annual calendar and distribute it among students at the beginning of each session. Classes should not be withheld except on stipulated holidays. The minimum stipulation of 220 working days each year must be adhered to. To discourage private coaching, tutorial classes may be arranged in the school itself; teachers should be admonished not to give tuition privately. The Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Higher Secondary Education should have a system of reviewing the performance of a school. A machinery has to be established to co-ordinate the functions of the district inspectorates of schools with those of the regional agencies of the Board and the Council. The School Inspectorate should be organized at the district level under the leadership of the District Education Officer who must have adequate experience in teaching as well as administration. His salary should not be below then that of a headmaster. He should be assisted by two District Inspecting Officers, one to be in charge exclusively of school inspection and the other to be responsible for accounts. The qualification for appointment of the inspecting staff should be comparable with that of secondary school teachers. Every school should be inspected at least twice a year. Copies of the inspection report should be forwarded to the school concerned, the Zilla Parishad, the

Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Higher Secondary Education or their regional bodies. It is to be seriously considered whether the present course of work education has succeeded in either developing among students a proper attitude toward productive labour or not. As school is the miniature of society, social service should be an integral aspect of school education. Successful participation in approved social services should be recognized by the issue of formal certificates which may receive adequate weightage in the final evaluation of a student's performance. The Board and the Council may also make it compulsory for every student belonging to Classes IX and XI to take part as volunteers in the total literacy and post-literacy campaigns. Service rules for all teachers irrespective of whether they serve a government school or an aided one should ideally be the same. It is equally desirable that teachers of all types of schools are selected through the same procedure and are subject to the same leave and transfer rules and retirement benefits.

The two papers currently reserved for the mother tongue in the secondary examination may be telescoped to one and half papers, and the residual half paper be assigned to Sanskrit - or to Persian or Arabic. The syllabus for Sanskrit must be thoroughly overhauled. The emphasis should be on the study of texts and grammar should be relegated to the background.

The paltry sum of Rs.600 which is offered on an annual basis to the eight hundred chatuspathis in the State should be raised to Rs. 5,000 per year. Measures should also be taken in hand to improve their scholastic standards on a selective basis and bring them under the discipline of a State-level board. The teaching of English in government and government-aided institutions may commence from Class V. Children may be introduced to the English alphabet and learn the meaning of some simple words and expressions in this class. A committee consisting of specialists in language teaching and others may be appointed to recast the series of Learning English so that the course content becomes easier to communicate to those for whom the series is intended; this committee may also decide whether some elements of English grammar could not be more directly introduced in the course. This committee should function as a standing review committee and suggest, from time to time, whatever improvements in the course content or method of teaching are felt necessary. The manual of instruction for teachers for teaching English should be suitably revised and translated into Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Nepali so that teachers whose acquaintance with English is at the ordinary level can comprehend its contents more easily. Training courses, each of at least a month's duration, should be organized so that teachers, in batches of one hundred, can go through an intensive training in the theory and practice of teaching English. The State government should

initiate a time bound-programme to conduct all administrative work at the headquarters as well as in the districts only in Bengali (or, wherever appropriate, in Hindi or Urdu or Nepali). It should similarly have a time-bound programme for holding examinations for entry into State-level services in Bengali and other local languages and to translate the basic statutes in these languages, so that the judiciary could follow suit. A beginning may be made to produce text-books of adequate standards in the mother tongue or tongues, so that the language or languages could be used for pursuing higher education too. The State government may set up a committee of specialists to formulate curricula for vocational and technical education courses of the following descriptions : (a) a two-years course for those pursuing education up to Class VIII, (b) a four-years course for the same group of drop-outs, (c) a two-years course for those who pass the secondary examination, (d) a four-years course aimed for the same group, and (e) a two- years course for candidates successful in the higher secondary examination. There should be provision for admission, following the successful completion of one course, to a more advanced one. Further, those who pass courses (d) and (e) should have the option to apply for admission to a university or an engineering college in the State to study for a bachelor's degree.

- **The One-man Committee (Dr. Pabitra Sarkar) on English in Primary Education, West Bengal, 1998.**

Regarding the teaching of English, the Committee recommended that English should start from Class III in Government and Government – aided primary schools. As an informal arrangement, from the second semester students of Class II will be acquainted with English vocabulary with the aid of picture –books. The committee has, however, made no recommendation about holding any examination at the end of studies at the primary level but has suggested that the matter can be reviewed every five years.

- **The School (Prof. Ranju Gopal Mukherjee) Education Committee, 2001-03.:**

The Committee recommended that the merit of curriculum and syllabi has to be judged keeping in mind the stated objective of the particular stage of education. The third language should be taught from class VI to VIII and Bengali/Nepali should be the compulsory third language for students who do not study any of these either as the first or the second language. Work education should be redesigned and reintroduced and reintroduced as a compulsory component at the secondary curriculum, carrying 50

marks. Along with Work Education, the Committee also recommended that Physical education should be made a compulsory examination subject for the Madhyamik (50 marks) and also an elective group at the H.S. stage. Provision should be made for suitable relaxation/exception in case of the physically handicapped. In the Committee's opinion, only one language, the mother tongue/regional language, should be taught up to class IV. Preparation should be made for result – oriented teaching of English as the compulsory second language from class V. Decision in this respect should await the result of the survey suggested by Prof. Sarkar's Committee. Time – bound research programme should be undertaken for designing appropriate syllabus, developing standard teaching materials and effective teaching methods, followed by extensive teacher orientation. Special attention should be given to the improvement of competency in mother tongue. The Committee recommended that a compulsory third language, to be selected from out of a list approved by West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (W.B.B.S.E) should be taught in class VI o VIII and for all students who do not study Bengali/Nepali either as a first language or as a second language, Bengali/Nepali should be the compulsory third language. These students should have the option to continue study of Bengali/Nepali as an additional subject in class IX and X. Again, Tribal languages should be taught in such a way that sentiments of this section of people are

honoured and at the same time their future prospect in higher education or employment market is not disturbed. The Computer Literacy Programme should be introduced by the state government from class VII to XII in selected schools of west Bengal should be withdrawn, because it is not consistent with the aims of mass education and also because the programme is being implemented in an extremely undesirable manner. Decisions on all academic programmes should invariably be taken by the respective Boards or Council and Computer Literacy Programme may be organized outside the School Education system at resource centres to be tagged to school clusters without charging any fees from the students. Regarding the teaching of Computer Application the Committee recommended that it should be taken as an optional subject in classes IX and X and also as elective subject at the H.S. level and no business concern should be involved in this process. According to the Commission, at the primary level values to be inculcated through curriculum where Value Education should not be a separate subject for teaching or examination. It should be integrated in all the subjects taught and all the activities undertaken in the school. Literature is the most effective means to inculcate values. Therefore every piece – story, essay, poem, drama etc. – must have specific value focuses and school should celebrate/observe secular occasions/festivals. The Committee emphasized physical education and recommended to restore it to its erstwhile status of

a compulsory subject at the Madhyamik examination carrying 50 marks and also recommended to introduce a new course named 'Life style Education' from class VIII onwards. A part of this programme will be included in the Life Science syllabus but the major portion should be based on activities to be planned in consultation with experts. According to the Commission, Vocational course should be designed after making systematic survey in the districts for identifying the actual needs. In the short – run, some suitable course may be selected from the large number of programmes prepared by the P.S.S.C.I.V.E. In this case, Special emphasis should be given to the requirements of rural West Bengal. For this, courses have been suggested by eminent academic person and also veteran observers of rural society. Efforts should be made to open broader employment possibilities through generic programmes and also multi-entry short-run programmes. In view of the variety and flexibility in the nature of vocational courses, a separate Board of Council should be set up with the exclusive responsibility of conducting the V.E.Ps. The need of vocational training for school dropouts at various levels and people in employment should be met by introducing flexible vocational courses under the R.M.V. The Committee recommended that Vertical mobility should be provided for only in the specific field corresponding to the V.E.Ps at the H.S. level. In the formal stream this can be planned by the State Council of Higher Education while for the non-formal sector the

challenge may be taken up by the Netaji Subhash Open University. For popularizing V.E.Ps, campaign programmes may be undertaken highlighting success stories. Vocational counseling may be helpful in motivating students. Scope of open schooling should not be extended to out – of school children of normal school going age who deserve the same formal schooling facility as enjoyed by the more fortunate children. R.R.M.V. should be more innovative in making its programmes accessible to larger number of learners. The state government should take steps to provide necessary infrastructural facilities to strengthen the R.M.V. Measures should be taken to invigorate school inspection and data collection or preservation facilitating meaningful planning to upgrade school education system. To improve the standard of teaching, the Committee recommended that efforts should be made to bring about even distribution of students in all the schools. A uniform method of admission to class-I should be followed by all schools. The practice of publishing the list of top 20 to 30 students in the Madhyamik and H.S. examination should be discontinued. The pattern of science education should be revamped for which standard text books in regional languages is a basic requirement. Also, workshops with simple tools should be set up in all schools. Regarding teacher education the Committee recommended that Comprehensive and coordinated arrangement should be made for regular teacher education and Occasional training sessions

should be organized for improving school management. It was also recommended that the SCERT should be properly strengthened to play its desired role in educational research and training and provisions should be made for formation of school clusters obligatory. Their purpose, composition, powers and functions should be laid down clearly. The Committee also recommended that school session should commence on 1st June and end on 31st May and concerted effort should be made to reach the target of 220 teaching days. Christmas vacation should not be observed in the secondary and H.S. School and a part of the Puja Vacation should be utilized for out of school activity based learning preferably through school clusters. In planning, organising and financing these programmes, school clusters should play a central role. The expenditure should be kept at a modest level and no burden should be imposed on the parents. W.B.B.S.E should prepare manuscripts of text books for all subjects in the secondary stage. Publication and marketing may be handed over to empanelled publishers on the basis of M.O.U and Drive should be given to mobilise additional resources through educational cess and also by empowering school Managing Committees to collect funds from the community. The practice of post publication review of answer scripts in general should be discontinued. Instead, the system of providing photocopies of answer scripts and there-after, if

necessary, re-evaluation by boards of experts may be introduced. This is found in some other states.

5.2.2 Study the progress of School Education in West Bengal:

The transformation of primary education scene has recently undergone in the State is impressive. The State government's determination to bring into the fold of education millions of children belonging to hitherto deprived sections especially in the rural areas also deserves plaudits. The numbers of primary schools have gone up by at least a quarter and student enrolments by more than 80 per cent in the course of these fifteen years; the distance between a primary school and an inhabited area does not exceed one kilometer in any part of the State. The so-called pre-primary stage of education has been brought under the ambit of primary education. Students do not have to learn two languages simultaneously at the primary stage. English has been excluded from the curriculum of primary teaching in government-aided institutions; all instructions, it has been decided, will be, as far as possible, through the mother tongue. In effecting this particular change, West Bengal has however merely followed the pattern already established in most other parts of the country; there is hardly any State where the teaching of English as a second language is introduced before the secondary stage. Be that as it may, a committee under the chairmanship of Shri Himangsu Bimal

Majumdar drew up a syllabus which discussed in detailed with care the curriculum to be pursued, from classes I to V, with the mother tongue as the medium of instruction and without the insertion of a second language at this stage. While establishing new primary schools due attention has to be provided on areas with a predominance of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe populations. To further encourage the entry of children from tribal communities into primary schools, the government has announced an ambitious programme of hostel accommodation exclusively for occupancy by adivasi children. This is in addition to the proposed scheme to build structures for new schools and repair old school buildings with the active cooperation of the panchayat bodies. It is equally necessary to develop the overall organisational infrastructure for primary education: A State-level Primary School Education Board, for which provision already existed in the Primary Education Act of 1973, has been established. The Board is supposed to exercise jurisdictional authority over the District Primary Education Councils; the objective is as much to decentralise as to democratise the primary education system. The number of primary school teachers has increased very significantly, and proposals are on the anvil to improve and expand the training of teachers. By 1991, the average number of teachers per primary school has risen to three. The new thrust on primary education is of course not the only reason for the state of ferment the West Bengal countryside is currently

in; land reforms, the introduction of a democratic structure of rural administration through the panchayat system, and the funneling of substantial development funds through it, have been the other contributory factors. Even so, it would be less than charitable not to admit the deep enthusiasm the reordering of the primary school system has by itself generated in rural areas.

In this connection a cautionary note has to be inserted. The question nonetheless arises whether the outlay of close to a thousand crore of rupees the government is now incurring annually on primary education would pass the test of a strict cost-benefit analysis. We cannot get away from the act that as much as 95 per cent of this outlay is for the payment of remunerations and other benefits to the staff. The student-teacher ratio in primary schools, according to official claims, is 40: 1; the government's intention is to bring it down further to 30: 1. The task of implementing this commitment will have its own implications. But since a vast majority of the schools continue to be overcrowded; children are huddled in worn-out, ramshackle structures or kutcha sheds exceedingly vulnerable to the elements. The supply of equipment such as blackboards, maps, globes, etc., is either minimal or non-existent. The attendance on the part of teachers is irregular and fitful. Members of the Commission during their tour of the districts had some evidence of habitual

absenteeism on the part of teachers; such has also been partly the experience of members of the Subjects Committee on Education of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly.

West Bengal, one of the most densely populated states in the country with a population density of 904 persons per sq. km. is severely affected by very low literacy rates. There are various historical, sociological and economical factors that can be credited for such high population density. Therefore making provision of basic infrastructure such as health and education a very challenging task since high population tends to affect per capita resource allocation which in turn affects the effectiveness and efficacy of the use to which this allocated resource is put.

In spite of the population pressure, West Bengal has made considerable progress in the field of literacy and school education. The present literacy rate is 68.2% as per the 2001 census; it was 57.7% in 1991 and 48.6 % in 1981, showing an increase in the rate of literacy. Between 1981 and 1991 the increased rate of literacy was 5.1%, while it almost doubled between 1991 and 2001, to 10.5%.

A significant share of the credit goes to the campaign on total literacy and to schooling for all children to achieve the goal of 'education for all'. The

school education system in West Bengal tries to ensure education for all children, reduce the drop-out rate and provide qualitative education.

However, in spite of the significant improvements in the enrolment ratios and dropout rates, it is estimated that almost 10 lakh children in West Bengal are out of school. An article on a study conducted all over India revealed that West Bengal tops the list of school drop outs. The article specified that, of the 19 districts in West Bengal, 9 have a dropout rate of over 50,000 children in the age group of 6-14 years. The article also highlights the glaring 9.61 lakh out of school children (in the same age group) in comparison to Bihars 6.98 lakhs children.

5.2.3 Find out the change and progress during the period from 1947-1976 in West Bengal.

Even after independence, the Bengal tried to continue that effort but it had its British hangover on the education system in Bengal. No such effort has been made to keep up the sprite of national movement so far educationists concerns as it was the bounding for Indian people to go with the British system of education during the colonial period. But since independence that bounding was not there. Even then the school education system could not come out from that hangover. Independence has given to develop our own system of education that is related to the development of the state but hardily that planning has been made

compressive education and socio-economic development of the state of West Bengal.

The West Bengal State Government, in this period constituted some Committees and Commissions for the development of school education in the state. These Committees and Commissions are S.M. Bose Committee-1949, Dr. B.B. Dey Commission-1954, Himangsu Bimal Committee-1974. As per the recommendations of B. B Dey Commission Secondary Education should be the responsibility of the State. All differences between aided and unaided schools should disappear. All schools should be under the control of the Director of Education. There may be a few independent schools which may not want any State aid; these also will have to satisfy the basic requirements for recognition. Regarding the future set-up of school education, the committee has recommended that there should be five years primary or junior basic schools, three years junior high school or senior basic school and four years higher secondary school where English and Bengali will be the two compulsory languages throughout the Secondary School course. For classes VI to VIII, Hindi will be compulsory language and for classes IX to XII, a classical language or Hindi or a foreign language or Additional English will be compulsory. The medium of instruction in the High School will be the regional language but in the, two top classes of higher

secondary schools, XI and XII, the medium of instruction may be English. The committee also recommended that the Managing Committees of Secondary Schools should be reconstituted on a new basis, avoiding as far as possible elections and the Headmaster should be the ex-officio Secretary of this Committee. In case of girls' schools, there should have a preponderance of women members in the committee and all schools should be registered under an Act of the Legislature.

There should be one Inspector responsible for inspecting not more than 50 High Schools in the year. Every school should be inspected thoroughly at least once a year. All schools should be provided with school kitchens for the cooking and supply of wholesome food to every pupil during Tiffin hour for a small charge. Again, every school should arrange for suitable extracurricular activities and for teaching at least one craft. The committee also recommended that the higher secondary schools should be multi-purpose in character with technical, trade, commercial and other course. To develop the quality of education in rural areas especially, special attention should be paid to the recruitment of teachers in such schools. As far the recommendation of the committee, the lowest qualifications of a teacher in a Secondary School should be the possession of the Intermediate or the Higher Secondary School Certificate, and a diploma in training and the Headmasters will be

selected from a panel by a Central Selection Committee and their pay will be guaranteed by the Government. To bring over all development, the committee recommended that national cadet corps, scouting, physical training games and leisure time activities for students should be introduced in all schools and the teachers should maintain a record of progress and attainment of each student in their classes.

On the basis of Himangsu Bimal Committee, the Government has been changed the syllabus and curriculum at the primary level. As per recommendations of this Committee English was abolished from the primary level of education up to Class - V.

In between 1947 to 1976 West Bengal government has established some educational institutions to bring changes in the educational scenario of Bengal. As per the government record in 1976 the number of primary school was (Class I - Class V) : 40,941, Secondary Schools (Class VI - Class X) : 7874, Higher Secondary Schools (Class XI - Class XII): 695. And the Enrolment in Institutions is in Primary Schools: 5,083,099, Secondary Schools: 2,487,632, Higher Secondary Schools: 60,429.

5.2.4 Find out the change and progress during the period from 1977-2009 in West Bengal.

In 1977 a combination of political parties assumed office in West Bengal with a clear-cut set of objectives in the sphere of education. These objectives were spelled out in the manifesto on the basis of which it fought and won the election. Then the Left Front government tried to implement the various programmes, such as:

1. Concrete and effective programme, including legislative and administrative measures backed by popular effort, for eradication of illiteracy;
2. Scientific reform of education policy and introduction of free compulsory education for all up to middle school stage;
3. Steps to fight decadence and imperialist penetration in the cultural field, and to foster progressive cultural activities;
4. Supply of books, paper, stationery and other contingencies to students up to Class VIII; free mid-day meal to students up to the primary stage;
5. Steps towards realisation of the right to education through mother tongue up to the highest level should be taken. Education through

all regional languages, including Urdu, Nepali and Santhali, to be encouraged up to the highest stages;

6. Security of services of teachers and employees in all educational Institutions. Direct payment by the Government to teachers' of all categories of their monthly salaries;
7. Enactment of a new, comprehensive Primary Education Act with provision for democratically elected School Boards with adequate representation for teachers. Establishment of a Secondary Education Grants Commission;

The above objectives as set out reflected the Front's intention to bring about a radical change in the educational system. It would be useful to refer here to the situation obtaining in the State in the period immediately preceding. The decade 1967-77 was marked by political upheavals in the State which severely affected the educational scene. The general environment was not exactly congenial for serious academic pursuit; students in schools, colleges and universities faced an uncertain prospect; the schedule of examinations was thrown totally out of gear; mass copying in examinations was a common feature. Most teachers and other stall - even off schools aided by the government—were without security of tenure; the payment of salaries was often irregular, and retirement benefits were inadequate and uncertain. The educational administrators

were, it would seem, mostly concerned with the art of soft pedaling the tasks assigned to them. A Primary Education Act was enacted in 1973, but remained largely unimplemented and a scheme for mid-day meal for students had been launched on a modest scale. A few centres for imparting non-formal education had begun to function. The Directive Principle of State Policy enshrined in Article 45 of the Constitution however remained by and large unimplemented; close to 60 per cent of the population in the State were unlettered; the proportion was even higher in the countryside.

Attention may be drawn to the phenomenal increase in the financial outlay on education since 1977. The non-plan outlay on education registered a ten-fold increase between 1976-77 and 1991-92 in absolute terms; the real rate of increase should be more than 300 per cent. The non-plan expenditure on education as a proportion of the total State budget moved up from 12.89 per cent in 1976-77 to 12.97 per cent in 1981-82, to 17.78 per cent in 1986-87, and to 21.10 per cent in 1992-93. If plan expenditure is included, overall outlay on education as proportion of total budgetary outlay exceeded 25 percent, and was closer to 30 percent, in the middle 1980's. Equally worth noticing is the fact that the increase in expenditure earmarked for education has during this period been accompanied by a pronounced shift in overall allocation in favour of

primary and secondary education, even though the allocation on primary education still falls short of that on secondary education.

Much of this increase however represents an aspect of 'catching up'. The level of educational outlay in recent years in West Bengal does not seem to be out of alignment with outlays in other major States of India; if anything, in some spheres the outlays lag behind outlays elsewhere. Data on financial expenditure in 1986-87 in a number of States in respect of primary and secondary education are reproduced from the Report of the Ninth Finance Commission. The Finance Commission applied a set of norms to demarcate actual outlay from what should have been the 'normal' outlay in different spheres by the different States. These norms were, in the case of education, based on such parameters as the proportion of enrolment in rural areas, the proportion of density of child population in specific age-groups, the proportion of private unaided schools to total number of schools, etc. In terms of these norms, West Bengal apparently spent about Rs. 84 percent on primary education than it ought to have on the non-Plan account; the actual expenditure fell short of the norm by nearly 40 per cent. The per capita actual expenditure was Rs. 34.14, which was the third lowest among the States. In contrast, in the sphere of secondary education, West Bengal's non-Plan outlay was nearly Rs. 1.03 crore more than what the national norm warranted. The per capita actual

spending on secondary education was Rs. 43, the fourth highest among the fourteen States for which data were made available.

The selection as well as definition of norms and the methodology by which these were derived by the Ninth Finance Commission have been subject to wide criticism, and its views need not be taken as sacrosanct. We may, in this connection, compare the outlay on education in West Bengal and in the country with that of a few other countries. The total expenditure on education as a proportion of both national income and total government expenditure for West Bengal, India, a number of Third World countries and a few developed countries as well. Despite the fact that the data are not related to a common base year, these still throw some light on how in each of these country's education is evaluated in terms of the yardstick of expenditure. India does not seem to rank very high whichever of the two criteria is applied; the position of West Bengal is scarcely may be better. Even among the Third World countries cited, the performance of Brazil, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia is way ahead of ours.

A corollary of the remarkable increase in the financial outlay of the State government on education is the increase in the number of educational institutions as also more intensive and extensive use of the physical facilities of institutions that already existed. Between 1976-77 and 1991-

92, the number of primary schools has increased by 10,080, of secondary schools by 569, and of higher secondary schools by 879.

Over these years the number of students at the primary level has been increased by 4,125,901 (81 percent); at the secondary level, by 4,416,122 (17 per cent); and at the higher secondary level, by 225, 382 (373 per cent).

The enrolment ratio of children in the age-group of 6-11 years in West Bengal increased from 87.4 in 1979-80 to 96.0 in 1983 -84 and then to 118.1 in 1987-88. In the years in question, the all-India ratio stood at 93.0, 93.4 and 97.9 respectively. Although the achievement in West Bengal in this respect was quite commendable - especially from 1983-1984 onward—that in some of the other major States like Tamil Nadu, Maharastra and Kerala indicates to what further extent enrolment could go up to. Similarly, the enrolment ratio of the children in the age-group of 11-14 years which was 41.7 in 1979-80 in West Bengal (the all- India ratio being 40.2) rose to 54.5 in 1983-84 (the all India ratio touching 48.9), and thence to 65.2 in 1987-88 (against an all-India ratio of 55.1). Once again, the ratio obtaining in West Bengal is slightly ahead of the national average, but substantially lower than that in States such as Kerala and Muharastra.

Some alternative estimates with respect to school enrolments can be gleaned from the findings of the 38th and the 43rd rounds of the National Sample Survey made available to the Commission. Since the 38th NSS round was carried out in 1983 and the 43rd round during 1987-88, the data in these tables again do not bring the story up to date. These nonetheless enable us to form certain judgments about the nature and extent of success in school enrolments.

The rate of literacy moved up in the State from 48.6 per cent in 1981 to 57.7 per cent in 1991. The relative ranking of West Bengal among 14 major States in the country did not however change over the decade. West Bengal was the filth most literate State in 1981 among these major Stales; it remained so in 1991. How the situation in West Bengal appears in a global context is a matter of concern.

With a view to universalising primary and secondary education, the West Bengal government has taken a number of measures. In 1967, the first United Front government had made primary education free. The second United Front government decided that girls belonging to rural areas were to be exempted from tuition fees. The government installed in 1977 proceeded much further, from January 1978; tuition fees for all students up to Class VI throughout West Bengal were abolished. Thereafter,

education up to Class X, and then up to Class XII, was made free with effect from January 1980 and January 1981 respectively.

The supply of free text-books, particularly to students of primary schools, is another fact worth mentioning. The free distribution includes the supply of all text books for all classes up to Class V and the text book on mathematics for Class VI. The text- books distributed are not in Bengali alone; a sizeable number of them are in Nepali, Hindi, Urdu, Santhali and English. That apart, a further number of text books are prepared and published under the auspices of the State Board of Secondary Education and sold to students at a fixed price. This list includes the text book for English for Class VI and text books on mathematics and English for Classes VII to X.

Two additional incentives were announced to help the cause of universalisation of primary education: free mid-day-meals and free school dress for a considerable number of girls attending primary schools. According to official claim, close to 33 lakh students benefited from the scheme of ‘mid-day-tiffin' for all school children in 1986, while 100 per cent of girl students belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities as well as 40 per cent of other girl students were supplied free school dresses in that year. This programme has however of late been adversely affected because of severe resource constraint.

One of the most significant decisions in the post-1977 period is of course the abolition of teaching English as a second language in Classes I to V and the simultaneous introduction of mother tongue as the only language to be taught at the primary level. It is however necessary to mention that these twin measures had already been adopted nearly everywhere else in the country.

Another change, pertaining to primary school education, was the doing away with the system of promoting students from one class to the next higher one on the basis of results of annual examinations. This system was replaced by a mode of continuous comprehensive evaluation so that shortcomings, if any, found in a student's learning could be corrected immediately; there would be no detention of students, and promotion from a lower class to the next higher would be automatic.

The State government, in the reforms it has undertaken since 1977, has accorded primacy of place to the furtherance of primary education. Statistics relating to educational growth do not always agree with each other. According to the Fifth All India educational Survey organised under the aegis of the National Council of Educational Research and Training, roughly 87 per cent of the boys and 70 per cent of the girls of the relevant age-group were enrolled in primary schools in 1986; nearly 13 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls were therefore yet unschooled in that year in the State.

Even though, the progress that has been achieved appears to be partly illusory. First, there is the problem of drop-outs. The Fifth All-India Educational Survey indicates that the maximum of drop-outs occurred at the end of Class I, the enrolment in Class II being only 56 per cent of that in Class I. In Class V, the ratio falls to 38 per cent, and further to 30 per cent in Class VI. The Fourth Report of the Subject Committee on Education of the State Legislative Assembly also draws attention to the persistence of drop outs in the early phase of education. This problem deserves to be examined at some length.

Despite some improvements in the very recent period, there continues to be a serious lack of minimum infrastructural facilities. The number of one-room schools is depressingly high, and was in 1986 as much as 30 per cent of the total number of primary schools. A concerted, phased effort is yet to be launched to mobilize locally available resources in order to construct school buildings cheaply and quickly. The problem of inadequacy of teachers looms large. The number of one-or two-teacher schools was over 30 per cent of the total in 1986; the situation is unlikely to have changed much since then. A further problem is the uneven school-wise distribution of teachers.

This raises the issue of quality of teaching. From all accounts, the quality as well as the method of teaching leaves much to be desired. In the primary education system, only a little more than three - fifths of the

teachers are trained. The trained teachers too are, by and large, neither equipped nor motivated to handle first generation learners coming from economically under privileged sections. The effectiveness of teaching at the primary level has evidently not kept pace with the increase in the number of schools and in enrolments.

Non-detention of students and continuous evaluation are academically sound propositions, but the first presupposes the effective application of the second. If reports are to be believed, continuous evaluation is not carried out in the majority of schools, partly due to shortage of teachers, but also on account of the inability of teachers to understand and apply the method correctly. Most children go through the phase of primary education without acquiring the knowledge and skills they were expected to acquire. This, in its turn, accentuates the tendency towards dropping out; parents begin to think that going to school is a waste of time for their children. The acutely difficult economic circumstances of the households from which the vast majority of the children come contribute further to drop-outs.

Problems abound in the sphere of secondary education too. In the reformulated curriculum, the relative importance of language teaching has been reduced, and that of physical and life sciences enhanced, while work education and physical education have been newly incorporated. Whether these changes call for a review and it has to be looked into by

the Commission. A view has, for example, been expressed that it is more important to concentrate attention on what is suitable and of practical use in the existing socio-economic framework of the State rather than adhere to theories of education or practices prevalent elsewhere.

One thorny issue in the secondary schools relates to the teaching of English have been considered as one of pedagogy, but unfortunately has been clouded, from the beginning, by controversies and factors other than academic. Be that as it may, there is a need to review the new method of teaching English in the light of the experience gained over the past few years.

The question of quality of teaching is of overriding importance in the case of secondary education too. School inspection has thinned out, and no substitute procedure for evaluating teaching has yet evolved. The need to impose accountability in some form or other in the light of the proliferation of private tuition in the recent period certainly demands the Commission's attention. Equally relevant is appraising the procedure for recruitment of teachers in both the primary and the secondary stages.

The 10 + 2 system was introduced in West Bengal in 1976, replacing the previous eleven-year school system, on the recommendations of the National Education Commission, 1964-66 (the Kothari Commission), and has continued without change since then.

Just as it is a fundamental duty of the State, imposed upon it by the Constitution of India, to provide elementary education to all children up to the age of 14 years, there is the parallel obligation to take into account the problem thrown up by the overwhelming presence of adults, particularly in rural areas, who are totally illiterate. Illiteracy has to be eradicated at all costs, and hence there os the need for non-formal education system. What role libraries and reading rooms can assume in this context deserves careful study. The Commission will understandably devote some attention to the outstanding problems that have reared their head in the context of the efforts to translate the dream of universal literacy into a reality.

5.2.5 Examine how far this change and progress are in tune with the national change and progress:

Since India is one country and the Union Government has the responsibility of developing its human resources, it is but natural that there should be one Indian education system that will make foe similar academic standard in all the regions. But our vast country with rich cultural heritage has pronounced dissimilarities in many aspects of social life. In fact, efforts to establish uniformity of standard were made since 1835, but with little success. Giving due recognition to the inevitability of regional variations, the Kothari Commission concluded that 'national

standard implies only a minimum below which no state be allowed to fall'. The structure and standards that now prevail aptly reflect our mach acclaimed 'unity in diversity'.

The first National Education Policy (1968) admitted that the education system prevailing till then benefited mostly the class, and not the masses. Again, when preparations were being made to introduce the new structure (10+2+3) of education throughout the country, the then Union Deputy Minister of Education and Social Welfare, Shri D.P. Jadav observed that the prevailing education system 'was fashioned primarily to suit the need of the elite, and the socially and economically underprivileged do not get sufficient justice from its working'. This significant shift in the government's attitude was the result of a realization that there was pressing demand in the society for expansion of opportunity at all levels of education. Urge was felt to restructure the system so as to meet the needs of the people. The declared objective was to use education as an instrument of social change.

The state governments were required to implement this new structure by designing suitable curricula and syllabi for the different stages of education. In the fields of school education, the NCERT as a nodal agency published various documents. These documents are meant to be models providing guidelines for the authorities in the different states in

their curriculum-framing exercise. The states have generally adopted these suggestions with modifications here and there according to their own priorities and judgment. For example, the three-language formula has not been accepted by all the states in the form suggested by the NCERT. While Tamil Nadu follows a two-language policy, in West Bengal the third language is taught only in classes VII and VIII. But never before did the state find any occasion to basically differ with the national framework as in its latest various that seeks to include 'education about religions, in the school curriculum. This proposition has created a sharp division among the states.

To keep relevance with the nation, the West Bengal Government has also brought changes in curriculum. At the primary level a committee was framed under the chairmanship of Shri Himangsu Bimal Majumder. The committee recommended that there should be a broad-based exchange of views among teacher and interaction with interested person and collection of opinions from the people in general through advertisement in the newspapers. The committee also had paid due attention to identify the specific objectives of education at the primary stage, graded according to the mental maturation of the children. The members of the committee found that their curriculum for the primary stages to be very similar to that of West Bengal. But one important deviation has been found in this

committee regarding the teaching of English as a second language as the committee discontinued the teaching of English in primary level.

In terms of the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education Act, designing and prescribing curriculum and syllabus for the secondary stages (class VI to X) is the function of the WBBSE. The Board is an autonomous body and its decisions on academic matters usually do not require states government's approval.

The structure of curriculum has been designed keeping in view the character and objectives of secondary education. It is the national consensus that secondary education- the terminal stage of mass education – should impact broad based general education.

At the higher secondary stages there is remarkable similarity in the curriculum followed in different states.

The 93rd amendment of the Indian Constitution, making Elementary Education a justifiable fundamental right of all citizens, has added a new dimension to the country's school education system.

The total span of school education in West Bengal is divided into 3 stages, namely, Primary (classes I to IV), Secondary (classes V to X), and Higher Secondary (classes XI to XII). All academic matter like framing of curriculum and syllabus, preparing or approving or recommending

textbook, holding final examination and publishing result are entrusted to three separate autonomous boards set up for the three stages by Acts passed by the state Legislature. The curriculum and syllabi for the secondary stage have been framed in general conformity with the national framework. These are carefully graded in order to ensure smooth transition from the earlier stage.

The curriculum and syllabi being followed at the primary level since 1981 are based on the recommendations of the committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. H. B. Majumder. The committee submitted its report in 1979 which acclaimed a significant place at the national level. This scheme of the study at the primary level has been continuing unaltered for the last two decades where the only deviation is in the study of English as a second language.

To ensure smooth transition from the primary level, the curriculum and syllabi for the secondary level have been framed in general conformity with the national framework.

Health Education, especially the Physical Education occupies a pre-dominant place in the curriculum of the primary level of education. The motto of which is to inculcate the sense of hygienic habits, making the children aware of the value of cleanliness, rhythmic physical exercise and activates, various sports and games. That means the mental and social

aspect of health has been given reference in the curriculum. At the secondary level of education also, physical education was made compulsory for all and was included in the external examination. But since 1996, physical education has become an optional subject.

Now - a - days the so-called disease AIDS has become a matter of grave concern in our society. The government of West Bengal has adopted several measures to tackle this threat, and desires inclusion of sex – education in some from or other with a suitable no-men–culture in the school curriculum.

To solve the 'drop-out' problem the West Bengal government has also launched the 'Mid Day Meal' program at the primary level.

As NCERT and NIEPA function at the national level and SCERT functions at the state level, DIET's were conceived of to contribute to the development of teacher training and education at the district level. The West Bengal government has also taken this matter under consideration and had already started the training of teacher at the different stages. The functions of the teacher training institution include imparting pre-service and in-service training to teachers, acting as a district resource unit to provide resource support such as extension, development of teaching aids and evaluation tools, engaging in curriculum and materials development, and undertaking educational planning and management at the grassroots

level. Its special target groups include women, scheduled castes and tribes, as well as educationally disadvantaged children.