CHAPTER – VI

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1.0 Introduction to Major Findings and Conclusions:

The major findings of the study are presented in this concluding chapter. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the educational implications that can be derived from the present study and the recommendations for further research in the field of school education in West Bengal.

6.2.0 Major Finding of the Study:

The details of the major findings of the study are given below:

6.2.1 Recommendations of Various Education Committees & Commissions about School Education in West Bengal:

- It is appeared that the Education Commission, 1954 recommended that, Secondary Education should be the responsibility of the State. The future set-up of school education should be changed. English and Bengali will be the two compulsory languages throughout the Secondary & Higher Secondary School course. Hindi will be compulsory for classes VI to VIII. The medium of instruction in the High School will be the regional language whereas for higher secondary schools English would be the medium of instruction.

- Whereas the Primary Education Syllabus Committee 1974-19 recommended that, English should be abolished from the primary level of education up to Class - V.
- While the Education Commission 1992 recommended to improve the infrastructure facilities of the school and to provide other basic facilities. The supply of free books at the beginning of each academic year should be ensured in primary schools. No primary school teacher should be engaged in any other occupation, profession or economic activity. The District Primary Education Council should organize district-level intensive training. The system of school inspection should be revived and restructured. Arrangements may be made to supply primary school children with a modest meal. The ultimate objective of school education in the State is to implement the Directive Principle of State Policy concerning elementary education, and to universalise facilities, universalise enrolment and universalise retention. For affecting any radical departure in secondary school education, the passive method of instruction has to be replaced. The syllabi for secondary education should be so redrawn. A major shift in the outlay on secondary education should occur in favour of institutions in the rural areas. The Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Higher Secondary Education should immediately undertake a joint

review of their curricula and syllabi. 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 aggregate. Social service should be an integral aspect of school education. The teaching of English in government and government-aided institutions may commence from Class V. 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. 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. The State government may set up a committee of specialists to formulate curricula for vocational and technical education courses.

- Although one man committee on English in Primary Education, West Bengal 1998 **also recommended reintroducing the** teaching of English from Class III in Government and Government – aided primary schools from next academic year that is 1999.
- Whereas the School Education Committee 2001opinion, only one language, the mother tongue or regional language should be taught upto class IV. Preparation should be made for result –oriented 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 improvement of competency in mother tongue. A compulsory third language, to be selected from out of a list approved by W.B.B.S.E should be taught in class VI to VIII. Decision on all academic programmes should invariably be taken by the respective Board or Council. School should celebrate or observe secular occasions or festivals. For improving standard of teaching, 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. Comprehensive and coordinated arrangement should be made for regular teacher education. School session should commence on 1st June and end on 31st May.

6.2.2 Curriculum & Syllabus of School Education:

After independence a Modern and Scientific Curriculum was introduced at the primary level of education where emphasis was given on Gandiji's basic education system. In West Bengal also a new curriculum was introduced in 1981. Based on the recommendations of Prof. Himangshu Bimal Majumdar Committee 1978, this new curriculum claims an innovative approach. In its bid to seek a total development of child, it kept in mind all the requirements for reaching this goal. With a view to making education life skill oriented and to making it realistic and practical, Co-scholastic subjects such as (a) Direct Experience-based works, (b) Creative and Productive works had been included as the basis of the curriculum. Emphasis was laid on Games, Sports and Physical Education, formation of scientific attitude and promotion of inquisitiveness and power of observation. The system of Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation along with the policy of No-Detention up to class IV was introduced. For the implementation of this curriculum, the Directorate of School Education took the initiative to develop the instructional materials such as text-books and some Guide-books. In West Bengal also SCERT, took up the initiative to prepare the text-books and the Guide-books. The manuscripts were then handed over to the Department of School Education for publication and distribution. With the introduction of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)

and the Policy of No Detention as per the new Curriculum it became an imperative on the part of the Government to impart training in all these respects to all the educational functionaries both at the State and District levels and then to the Primary teachers as well. It was the SCERT that took the initiative to impart necessary orientation in all these respects. A three-tier and time bound Orientation Programme could however, be undertaken in 1994 – 1995.

6.2.3 West Bengal Board of Primary Education:

This was constituted on the basis of the West Bengal Primary Education Act, 1973, which was enacted to provide for better development and management of primary education in order to make it universal, free and compulsory. The Act sought to repeal the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act, 1930, the Bengal (Urban) Primary Education Act, 1963 and the West Bengal (Rural) Primary Education (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1969. On the basis of this Act were also constituted the District Primary Schools Councils for every district as well as Calcutta Primary Schools Council for the district of Calcutta.

6.2.4 West Bengal Board of Secondary Education:

This state splits its Secondary Education Board into two separate organizations, administered under completely separate Acts. The first of

these organizations is the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education administered by the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education Act, 1963. This Act sought to repeal the West Bengal Education Act 1950 and 1954.

6.2.5 West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education:

This is the second organization to handle secondary education in the state. It is administered by the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education Act, 1975. As compared to the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, this Council is a corporate body that runs the state's higher secondary education system.

6.2.6 Additional Schools:

In the state of West Bengal the total number of government schools providing primary education is 51016 (Provisional DISE 2010-11), out of which 50604 are pure primary schools. There are 16 districts in West Bengal wherein there are places which do not have any primary school/SSK within 1 km of habitation. The estimate shows that there is a need to setup 1557 new primary schools in designated areas to bridge this gap and thereby ensure adequate access. There is a need to set up 14165 upper primary schools/sections.

6.2.7 School Infrastructure*:*

The West Bengal Government will have to expedite up gradation of infrastructural facilities and SSA would be able to provide necessary funds for this purpose. The Government has about two years to do this job. This would require survey of each government school to identify the infrastructure requirements and the local authority should be involved in this exercise.

6.2.8 Teachers' Accountability:

The Central RTE Rules provides that each teacher shall maintain a file containing the pupil cumulative record for every child which will be the basis for awarding completion certificate of elementary education. The State RTE Rules may also specify minimum number of working hours per week. The head teacher must ensure that each teacher adheres to the minimum working hours.

6.2.9 Strengthening Inspection:

Periodic inspection/supervision of schools is critical. Also it is to be understood that the role of school supervisor is not limited to inspection alone- it could also be advisory in nature. Designation of school inspection staff needs to be changed.

6.2.10 Teachers' Training:

In West Bengal, teacher education has been undergoing an expansion since independence, as witnessed by the increase in the total number of teacher-education institutes from 59 in 1947 to 111 in 1997. Of these, 55 were Primary Teachers Training Institutes (PTTI's). These were earlier called Junior Basic Training Institutes (JBTI's), and numbered 33 in 1967. In 1997, the 55 PTTI's had an intake capacity of about 5o15 candidates per year. They offer a one year-certificate course for new as well as in-service primary teachers, in the ratio of 30:70 on the recommendation of the Ashok Mitra Commission.

Similarly, the number of training colleges for secondary school teachers grew from 5 in 1947 to 47 in 1997. The academic control of these B. Ed. colleges lies with the universities to which they are affiliated.

However, in spite of these training institutes, there are a large number of untrained teachers at both the primary as well as the secondary level. A study of NCTE reveals that 47% of total seats in PTTI's were lying unfilled in 1997!

This undoubtedly calls for better management of these institutes and a scrutiny of their policies. The quality of the faculty, duration of course and curriculum also need to be comprehensively examined, and follow-up

of pedagogical principals and transactional processes in actual classroom situations needs to be strengthened. The importance of "developing standard teaching materials and effective teaching methods, followed by extensive teacher orientation" was reiterated in a report of the School Education Committee.

6.2.11 Quality of Primary Education:

The quality of primary education continues to be a matter of serious concern in both rural and urban West Bengal. The 1992 Report of the State Education Commission made a number of comments about the delivery of public education, which were echoed in a report by the Pratichi Trust in 2002. Some of the areas of concern identified in both reports include: poor infrastructure and inadequate equipment in schools; sporadic and irregular attendance of some teachers; lack of accountability of teachers; and inadequate school inspection.

6.2.12 The West Bengal School Service Commission:

After independence as per the recommendations of The Secondary Education Commission 1954, the responsibility of recruitment of the teacher was given on the School Managing Committee. To recruit quality teachers West Bengal Governments established West Bengal School Service Commission, 1997. It came into force with effect from

01.11.1997 for the purpose of recruitment of Assistant Teacher and Headmaster/ Headmistress in recognized Non-Government aided Schools in West Bengal and presently the recruitment processes are guided by the West Bengal School Service Commission (Selection of Persons for Appointment to the Post of Teacher) Rules, 2007 and relevant amendments thereafter. But later on The State Government decided that recruitment in the posts of the Librarian, Clerk and Group-D Staff including Laboratory Attendant, Peon, Night Guard, Matron in recognized Non-Government aided Schools in West Bengal should also be recruited through School Service Commission, and accordingly necessary amendments have been introduced in the said Act, vide the West Bengal School Service Commission (Amendment) Act, 2008 (West Ben. Act IV of 2008) and such selection process be guided by the West Bengal School Service Commission (Selection of Persons for Appointment to the Post of Non-Teaching Staff) Rules, 2009.

6.2.13 West Bengal Economy before the Left Front Government:

The history of West Bengal before independence was a history of colonial exploitation. Bengal was the first area to be colonized in India by the British. Therefore, it also faced the worst of colonial exploitation. According to Prof. Amiya Bagchi, "the external drain from Bengal could be put at about 3 to 4 percent of the gross domestic material product." This huge drain of wealth from Bengal was at the cost of the peasants of

the state. The feudal landlords and their other parasitic agents (born as a result of the Permanent Settlement) squeezed the peasantry of the state to extract the tribute to be paid to the colonial Government. In the process there was hardly any expenditure on investment in agriculture and the agrarian sector entered into a deep crisis.

The state also witnessed an absolute decline in the food-grain production per capita in the fifty-year period preceding the Indian independence. Immediately before independence, the state witnessed one of the worst famines in history where more than 3 million people died, their poverty and utter helplessness captured in all its gory details in the haunting short stories of Manik Bandyopadhyay. With India gaining independence, this situation while improving to some extent did not change fundamentally. This was because of a number of factors. Firstly, the grip of the parasitic landlords, *jotdars* and moneylenders in the village economy did not decline. These sections became active supporters of the Congress party. The institutional factors resulting in the agrarian crisis in West Bengal did not change drastically. As a result, the state continued to face food shortage leading to the historic food movement in 1957. Secondly, with partition the biggest industry of Bengal, jute, suffered a huge setback. This was because jute was mainly cultivated in East Bengal while the factories were in West Bengal. With partition, the source of raw materials for the jute industries in West Bengal was cut off, leading to a crisis in

this industry. The other major industry of tea also suffered set back because the communication channels through the erstwhile East Bengal suffered as a result of partition. Thirdly, there was a huge influx of refugees into the state as a result of the partition. According to one estimate there were more than 3.5 million refugees from East Pakistan in the year 1951 itself. Additionally, the freight equalization policy adversely affected the industries in West Bengal. All this essentially meant that the economy of West Bengal was reeling under tremendous crisis both in the agrarian sector as well as the industrial sector. The resulting unemployment and a sense of frustration created a social crisis in the state. It was but natural that the people of the state rose up against the ruling regime which instead of doing anything to solve the crisis was hell bent on perpetuating it since its class interests remained with that of the *jotdars* and landlords who were mainly responsible for precipitating the crisis in the first place. Without having any answer to the massive democratic movement taking shape in the state the Government resorted to semi-fascist terror to exterminate the CPI (M) and left forces from the state, which were at the forefront of the people's movement demanding a better life. However, the intensity of the democratic movement with the people determined to defeat the agents of stagnation and semi-fascist terror, resulted in the formation of the first Left Front Government under the leadership of Com. Jyoti Basu in the year 1977.

6.2.14 Economic Growth In West Bengal Under The Left Front Government.

With the Left Front Government coming to power in the state, there was a significant turnaround in the performance of the West Bengal economy. The Growth rate of West Bengal's income was 4.9 during the period 1971 to 2006. (Source: West Bengal Development Report, 2010, Planning Commission, Government of India.).

From the above source it is clear that the West Bengal economy has increased its growth rate in each period starting from 1971. The growth rate was lowest before the Left Front Government came to power (1971-1980). With the Left Front coming to power however, there has been a significant increase in the overall growth rate of the economy. Moreover, it is also the case that the West Bengal economy recorded the highest growth rate amongst all the states in India in the period 1993-94 to 2002-03. That is 8.55 when India's growth in economy was 6.87. It is remarkable that a state which was deeply in crisis a few decades back could improve itself to such an extent so as to record the highest growth rate in the country at a time when neo-liberal reforms were introduced leading to a situation where growth rates of majority of the states actually declined.

This economical growth also affected the field of education. The basic indicator of educational attainment is the literacy rate. West Bengal's

performance in improving the literacy rate has been notable although the state has not reached full literacy. However, it is also the case that West Bengal's literacy rate is higher than the national average. Literacy rate in West Bengal in 2001 was 68.64 when India's literacy rate was 64.84.

One of the significant issues about education in West Bengal is the reality that a majority of the children go to Government schools. In 2009, 85.4% of the school going children attended Government run schools. This has happened primarily because of the fact that the Government has increased the number of schools in the various districts of West Bengal very significantly. The number of primary schools in West Bengal increased from 40911 in 2000-01 to 42624 in 2008. As a result of the significant increase in number of schools in West Bengal, the gender gap has also considerably come down. At the primary level the sex ratio in enrollment in West Bengal was 97.6% and in upper primary section the sex ratio was 100.8% for the year 2007-08.

The condition of school education in West Bengal has witnessed a significant improvement over the years. Prof. Amartya Sen, on the basis of the findings of the report on education in West Bengal conducted by the Pratichi Trust notes the following points: "First, there is not only a higher rate of student enrolment, but also a significantly larger average attendance of enrolled students (75 per cent both for primary schools and SSKs - up from 58 and 64per cent respectively).

"Second, even though the problem of absentee teachers remains, there is in fact a noticeable fall in the percentage of absentee teachers on the randomly chosen day of our visit (14 per cent in primary schools, down from 20 per cent, and 8 per cent in SSKs, down from 15 per cent). There is also some increase in the number of teachers per school.

"Third, the level of parent satisfaction with the performance of teachers has also gone up (from 52 per cent to 64 per cent for primary schools and from 70 per cent to 75 percent for SSKs), even though it is still far from perfect. Parents' satisfaction with the progress of children is up significantly (from 42 per cent to 71 per cent for primary schools and from 49 per cent to 73 per cent for SSKs).

"Fourth, we were really depressed with the 2001-02 results of independent testing of students' achievements, for example, the fact that 30 per cent of the students in classes III and IV could not even write their own names. There has been considerable improvement in this area, and the proportion of students who could not write their names is now down from 30 per cent to just 5 per cent (that proportion should of course be zero per cent, but it would be silly not to see the progress that is observed).

"Fifth, midday meals are now being served in most primary schools and SSKs, and there are clear indications of the benefits of that initiative both in educational and nutritional terms. Indeed, even the increased

attendance of students in schools partly reflects the attraction of the school meals, even though the effort of the teachers' unions, particularly in reducing teacher absenteeism, has also greatly helped, in many regions. "Sixth, parent-teacher meetings are now much more in use, mostly in the form of mother-teacher committees, even though we still have specific suggestions for improving their reach."

In other words, it is indeed the case that there has been a notable improvement in the school education system in West Bengal in the recent period. These gains should be consolidated while striving to ensure even better education and educational facilities to all the children of the state.

6.3.0 Conclusions of the Study:

It is evident from the analysis and interpretation and also from the findings of the study that lots of changes have been made in West Bengal with a special reference to school education. More than ten committees and commissions were constituted bring quality school education in the state. It appears from the study that every committee and commission has recommended for bringing change and modification of school education. But so far the implementation is concerned all the recommendations were not applied due to certain socio-political and economic constraints. But some significant steps were taken by government of West Bengal so far school education is concern. The whole of primary and secondary

education was made provicialization by the Government of India. That is a bold step taken by Government of West Bengal in India first. All these recommendations were not viable to implement. Lots of problems have been taken place in withdrawing English as a subject at the primary level. Whatsoever, English was withdrawn from the primary level but subsequently due to the resistance of the masses it was reintroduced. Similarly, the New Education Policy 1986 was not adopted at the initial stage because the government was not in a position to adopt all the recommendations made by the policy. Of course, later on with the financial cooperation of the central government the policies were implemented. During 90's the economical scenario of the whole world was changed a lot. Therefore, the government has no other alternative but to cope-up with the globalization of the economy and education. Hence, gradually the changes were adopted.

Sometimes the ideological or philosophical perspective of the state government and central government made a midway for the progress of education. Although the school education is the concern of the state but so far as the constitutional commitment was concerned, education as a whole came under the concurrent list. Therefore, an integrated approach for the development of school education is essential and for which the government of India has launched lots of programmes such as- SSA, RUSA, e.t.c. Now the government of West Bengal is also trying its level

best to cope-up with the national and international system and standard so that the human resource which are developed during this stage could get the opportunity compete the national and international stage in near future.

6.4.0 Suggestions for the Further Research:

The researcher while conducting the present study find that some of the important areas are there in the field of school education which were not taken into the consideration in the present study due to lack of time and finance. Therefore, in future following studies can be conducted in the field of school education:

1. To study the problem of implementation of recommendation of various committees and commissions.
2. To study the financial feasibility taken up by the government of West Bengal so far as provincialization of school education is concerned.
3. To study the curriculum of school education.

4. To study the syllabus and text books of school education.
5. To study the evaluation system of school education.
6. To study the teacher education programme adopted along with the change in the school education.