

CHAPTER V :DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

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#### 5.100 Introduction :

The liberal philosophy of democracy, and advancement of science and technology have influenced education to a large extent in the modern age. On one hand, there is a realization of the importance of individual freedom and happiness, and on the other hand, there is also a need to learn non-traditional skills to cope up with the challenges of the industrial revolution. The survival of democratic ideals and learning of non-traditional skills depend very much on proliferation of knowledge to all the members of society. As a result of these influences, many new concepts like universalization of education, compulsory education, equality of educational opportunity, adult education and so on have now been added to education. The education which was only for 'selected few' and was a matter of 'leisure' is now being considered as a force to uplift the social and economical standards of individuals by enriching their knowledge and developing their skills.

With the realization of importance of mass education, provision of free and compulsory education was made in the directive principles of Indian Constitution. Since masses could not afford to go to fee charging private schools,

government started a number of public schools in order to make education accessible to all. Thus, two systems of schools came into existence - one run by the government and the another run by the private agencies. Private schools are attended by those, who can afford to pay the fees, whereas, the less privileged sections are going to public schools, where education is free. Theoretically speaking, educational opportunities have now been extended to each and everybody in the society. However, the aim of equality of educational opportunity cannot be achieved only by removing the economical barriers but it also requires (positive) compensatory measures to counter the adverse effect of poor home background in order to bring the achievement level of students of both the school systems at par.

Here an attempt is made to evaluate and compare the two systems of schools, input output-wise (see objectives, chapter III). Differences in output will indicate as to how far public schools are providing equal opportunities. The study of inputs will show the kind of school services provided. The comparison will throw light on the direction in which improvement of schools can be made.

#### 5.200 Comparison of Inputs and Output :

The information regarding various school inputs was collected from the principals and the teachers. On the basis of collected information, school-wise evaluation and system-wise comparison were made. The achievement of the students of two systems was also calculated. The results presented in fourth chapter were reorganized in order to compare the two systems as shown in Table 5.1.

The results presented in Table 5.1 reveal that the mean achievement of private school students is 26.05 and that of public school students 15.54. In other words, the output is unequal, suggesting that the school factors are not able to reduce the adverse effect of the poor family background. The results further reveal that input-wise, there is no clear trend favouring any one system. Some inputs are better in private schools, some in public schools, while some are equal in both the systems. Private schools are better in 'physical facilities', 'library facilities' and 'instructional materials', whereas, public schools are better in 'per student expenditure' and 'leadership behaviour'. Both systems of schools are equal in facilities like 'teaching methods', 'staff composition', 'co-curricular activities', 'assessment scheme' and

Table 5.1 Input-Output Wise Comparison of Private and Public Schools

	PRIVATE		PUBLIC	
<b>INPUTS</b>				
1. Pedagogical	Mean Score	Evaluation	Mean Score	Evaluation
a. Teaching Methods	1.87	Frequently	2.00	Frequently
b. Instructional Facilities				
i. Physical	22.50	Good	15.30	Fair
ii. Library	10.31	Good	7.00	Fair
iii. Staff Composition	4.52	Fair	4.58	Fair
iv. Instructional Materials	7.50	Fair	5.15	Poor
v. Co-curricular activities	8.06	Poor	8.19	Poor
vi. Assessment Scheme	14.00	Fair	16.0	Fair
	Per student Expenditure		Per student Expenditure	
2. Economical (Finance)	133.33 Rs.		222.12 Rs.	
3. Socio-Psychological	Frequency		Frequency	
a) Organisational Climate				
i. Open	2		2	
ii. Autonomous	3		1	
iii. Controlled	6		7	
iv. Familiar	1		6	
v. Paternal	1		3	
vi. Closed	3		7	
b) Leadership Behaviour	Percentage		Percentage	
i. High Initiative High Consideration	-		26.93	
ii. High Initiative Low Consideration	56.25		42.30	
iii. Low Initiative High Consideration	-		3.84	
iv. Low Initiative Low Consideration	43.75		26.93	
<b>OUTPUT</b>				
1. Achievement	26.05		15.54	

'organizational climate'. The mixed trend does not lead to the conclusion that the students of public schools are achieving less because of the poor school facilities (facilities taken in the present study). The results indicate that there is a need to make an intensive search of the factors influencing the achievement of the students.

5.210 Academic Achievement : Academic achievement is influenced by many factors. They can be broadly classified under individual differences, family background and school services. The effect of school services, Socio-Economic Status and intelligence can be separated by comparing the mean differences as shown in Table 4.19. The mean difference in achievement on unadjusted means between private and public schools when influence of different factors is not controlled is 10.5082 (private, 26.0467; public, 15.5385). When the influence of Socio-Economic Status and intelligence is controlled statistically (adjusted means), the mean difference is reduced to 4.1583 (private, 22.8369; public, 18.6886). The results reveal that the influence of school factors on achievement breeds the difference of 4.1583, while that of Socio-Economic Status and intelligence 6.3499 (10.5082-4.1583).

In other words, the achievement of the students of both the systems is comparatively more affected by differences in socio-economic status and intelligence than the differences in schools. Coleman (1966) also arrived at the same conclusion.

#### 5.220 School Services, Socio-Economic Status and Achievement :

The interpretation of achievement becomes more meaningful if interaction between school services and socio-economic status is seen as shown in Table 4.21 and Figure 4.1. The results reveal that -

1. When students of same socio-economic status go to different school systems, the students going to private schools achieve higher as compared to those going to public schools (Socio-Economic Status I, Private 28.50; Socio-Economic Status II, Private 27.01, Public 16.07; Socio-Economic Status III, Private 24.98, Public 16.45; and Socio-Economic Status IV, Private 17.82, Public 14.67)
2. In private schools, students belonging to high Socio-Economic Status achieve higher in comparison to those belonging to low Socio-Economic Status (Socio-Economic Status I, 28.50; Socio-Economic Status II, 27.01, Socio-Economic Status III, 24.98, and Socio-Economic Status IV, 17.82).

3. In public schools, the achievement of different Socio-Economic Status groups does not differ much (Socio-Economic Status II, 16.07, Socio-Economic Status III, 16.45; and Socio-Economic Status IV, 14.67).

The interaction between school services and Socio-Economic Status brings forth the assumption that there are some inherent characteristics in public schools which affect adversely the achievement of the students. It is to such an extent that even higher Socio-Economic Status students in public schools achieve lower than the lowest Socio-Economic Status students of private schools. Since the studied inputs are somewhat similar in both the systems, the reason may lie at more subtle level of inputs, like human interaction and motivation.

While discussing the results, two vital factors namely 'student ratio' and 'homogeneity of systems' cannot be overlooked. The Table 4.21 reveals that all Socio-Economic Status I students go to private schools, majority of Socio-Economic Status II to private, Socio-Economic Status IV to public and Socio-Economic Status III are almost in equal number in both the systems. Evaluation of private and public schools shows that private schools are more heterogenous, that is some private

schools are very good while some are very poor in school facilities. The public schools on the other hand are comparatively more homogeneous, that is there is not much of difference in the school facilities among the public schools.

#### 5.300 Profile of Public Schools

Public schools in the city of Baroda are run by the Municipal Corporation of Baroda. The Corporation has schools covering the whole city. There are in all 104 schools (1976-77) and many more schools are being established.

Most of the schools are housed in Corporation's own buildings but quite a few are in rented buildings also. Those buildings which are owned by Corporation are mostly in good condition, so far as the construction, space and ventilation are concerned. Comparatively, rented buildings are in poor condition. The rented buildings are being replaced by new buildings constructed by Corporation. Fifty per cent of the public schools are located in natural surrounding and remaining are located in congested areas. Nearly sixty per cent schools have playground. There is no transportation facility, as the schools are situated within walking distance.

Many public schools do not have provision for principal's room, staff room, office room, store room, reading room, and audio-visual room. As far as class-rooms are concerned, public schools vary from spacious to dingy and small rooms. Sometimes two classes run in one room without any partition, and sometimes classes are even run in the corridors. In some of the classes sitting arrangement consists of benches, whereas in some children sit on the floor. Nearly sixty per cent of public schools have more than 40 students in each class, while in rest of the schools the student population is around 30 per class.

Teaching methods generally used in public schools are text-book methods, question-answer, story telling, translation grammar, demonstration, problem solving, and direct method. The methods like group technique, audio-visual aids, role play, field trip, dramatization and structural approach are used less frequently. Audio-visual aids like, charts, pictures and models are used by the teachers.

Generally, the teachers of public schools are P.T.C., and have more than six years of experience. Teachers have to perform the extra duties like clerical work, serving of mid-day meals, and working for family planning. They get their pay

according to norms laid down by 'Desai Commission'.

All the public schools have provision for library, but there is no reading room facility, and no fixed library hours. Library work is looked after by the teachers themselves.

Co-curricular activities are allotted less time. Equipments like harmonium, dandia, manjira, khanjari, flute and dresses are used for cultural programmes.

Per student expenditure of public schools is around Rs.220 per year. The major expenditure of public school is on staff salary, and ancillary services. They provide free mid-day meal, instructional materials like text-books and slates, uniforms, scholarships to needy and meritorious students. The expenditure on physical and health education is less than one rupee per student per year so also the expenditure on instructional materials.

Most of the public schools have controlled, familiar and closed climate, while a few have open, paternal and autonomous climate. The leadership pattern in most of the schools is high initiation and low consideration.

Examinations in the public schools are conducted monthly, half yearly and annually. The type of questions asked are essay type, objective and multiple type. Progress report includes personal data, behaviour of the students, academic progress, medical report, leadership qualities, group working and discipline.

Students coming to public schools belong to Socio-Economic Status, II, III and IV. More than ninety-five per cent of them belong to Socio-Economic Status III and IV. Mean achievement score of public school students is 31 per cent.

On the whole, the facilities provided in public schools are not bad. Moreover, the funds are also sufficient, but the educational environment of the public schools is felt to be unsatisfactory. Teachers have less concern towards the students. Most of the students run away after the recess, when the mid-day meal is served.

#### 5.400 Profile of Private Schools :

The number of primary schools run by the private managements in the city of Baroda is 66 (1976-77). Most of them are situated in upper class areas and some are scattered in the periphery also.

Most of the private schools are located in natural surrounding, having good buildings, construction, space and ventilation. Sixty per cent of the schools have play ground and twenty five per cent of them have transport facilities.

All the private schools have principal's room. Most of them have staff room, office room, store room, audio-visual room and canteen. A few of the schools have museum, indoor games room and auditorium also. Classrooms are spacious, and are provided with benches. Fifty per cent of the schools have more than forty students per class.

Teaching methods generally used in private schools are text-book method, question-answer, story telling and structural approach, while the methods like, group technique, audio-visual aid, role play, dramatisation, demonstration and translation grammar are used less frequently. All schools use charts and pictures. Fifty per cent of the schools have radio, and a few schools have projectors and tape recorders.

Most of the private school teachers have qualifications like P.T.C. and B.A., B.Ed. Some of them are only S.S.C. passed and a few are even M.A., B.Ed. Experience of the teachers varies from less than five years to more than ten

years. In twenty five per cent of the schools teachers are assigned clerical duties. Most of the private school teachers are getting their salary according to norms laid down by 'Sarela Commission'.

Almost all the schools have library; more than fifty per cent of them have reading room facilities; all of them have fixed library hours; and twenty five per cent of the schools have full time librarian.

Cocurricular activities are allotted less time. Equipments like harmonium, tabla, flute, loudspeaker, dandia, manjira, khanjri and dress materials are used for cultural programmes.

Expenditure per student of private schools is around Rs.133 per year. Major expenditure is on staff salary.

The expenditure on instructional materials is less than two rupees per student per year, so also the expenditure on physical and health education, and ancillary services.

Most of the private schools have controlled climate. Some of them have closed and autonomous, while a few have open, familiar and paternal climate. The leadership pattern in private schools is either high initiative-low consideration or low initiative-low consideration.

Most of the private schools conduct examinations quarterly, half yearly and annually, while a few conduct weekly, fortnightly and monthly examination. Most of the schools ask essay type, objective type, and multiple type, questions. Progress report includes personal data, behaviour of the child, cultural activities, games, and sports, academic progress, medical report, discipline and leadership quality.

Students attending the private schools belong to all the socio-economic classes. Most of them belong to Socio-Economic Status II and III. Mean achievement score of private school students is fifty-one per cent.

Private schools are heterogeneous, some are having very good facilities while some are having very poor facilities. On the whole the educational environment in private schools is satisfactory.

#### 5.500 Where do We stand on the path of Equality :

Past thirty years have witnessed dramatic changes on the scene of education at all levels. The demographic explosion, the greatly increased demand for education engendered by a rise in personal income, shifts in the occupational

structure, a changed attitude towards education and emphasis on the economic benefits of education, all these factors have been instrumental in creating what has come to be called the educational explosion which has opened up new vistas of educational opportunities for the masses.

To review the steps taken upto now by the government to provide educational opportunities to socially and economically backward classes, a large number of public schools have been established by the government, where education is imparted free, along with, incentives like, text-books, instructional materials, mid-day meals, scholarships etc. Moreover, post school opportunities are protected by keeping reserved seats. But a careful analysis reveals that despite the conscious and vigorous efforts at equalising educational opportunities in the country, the overall picture remains unfortunately that of pervasive inequality. Although everyone is getting more in absolute terms, in relative terms the disparity-ridden situation is much the same as before.

The results of the present study reveal that

- There is disparity in the achievement of the students of private and public schools.

- The public schools have some inherent characteristics which curtail the progress of even the students belonging to higher socio-economic status.
- Disparity within the private school system is alarming. Some private schools are very good while some are very poor.

Where does the fault lie? Has the programme of raising the achievement level failed? Does it mean that the less privileged cannot improve their standard? or is it that the social disparity cannot be removed?

5.510 Socio-Psychological and Educational Diagnosis and Remedial Measures :

Here an attempt is being made to locate the causes of the problem of inequality from psychological, social and educational point of view and suggest some remedies.

5.511 Psychological : Environment of public schools raises certain doubts about the attitude of students, parents and teachers towards education.

It was observed that nearly fifty per cent of the students of public schools run away after taking their mid-day meals.

This brings forth two points; the necessity of food, and the lack of proper orientation towards education. The reasons for this lie at home as well as in the schools.

The root cause of lack of orientation of an individual can be traced to the early childhood experiences, where parents' aspiration is low, - may be due to illiteracy, ignorance and socio-economic backwardness. They are not able to help the children in terms of preschool training, attention in day to day progress, developing proper value system towards life, self and others, and giving right kind of guidance for occupation. Parents of the students of public schools were interviewed (structured questionnaire, appendix A-7), the obtained results of which are presented in appendix-B, it was found that 47 parents out of 50, had no idea about the future occupation of their children, and they believed that it would be decided by the fate of the child, (Table B-11); 32 parents never visited schools (Table B-9); most of these students do their homework without any help (Table B-7), face difficulties about books and space (Table B-6); have fathers who are either unskilled or skilled labourers (Table B-2). The lower income families do not provide their children with the experiences crucial for

developing the need to achieve, may be because of parental authoritarianism and early withdrawal of supervision (Ausubel and Ausubel, 1963), absence of a strong father figure (McClelland, 1961), impoverished environment of low income families (Hunt, 1968b), hamper the child's cognitive development and hence reduces the frequency of success experiences. The poor home background fails to orient the child towards education.

The children who are not properly trained by the parents when they come to school are the victims of negative attitude of teachers. They lower the self esteem of the students. Instead of diminishing the early deficiencies this attitude worsens the situation and fails to make the child adjust to the schools. The negative attitude of the teachers may be due to the negative feedback given by the students and complacency generated by the security of the job.

The investigator came to know through the discussion with the teachers that the teachers have formed a negative opinion and think that these children have dirty habits, use abusive language, are not going to be benefitted by education and thus are beyond redemption. Moreover, there is no check

on the teachers and they are not worried about loosing the job. As a result, instead of trying to improve the standard of the students, they become careless in performing their duties and show less concern towards the students. The alineation created in the teachers affects the teaching process to such an extent that even the students belonging to higher socio-economic status achieve less. These teachers themselves send their children to private schools thinking that public schools are of poor standard and if their children study in public schools, they will be spoiled. Irony of the problem is that even the city fathers of Baroda, who matter in forming public opinion for education of the public schools send their children to private schools. In the light of this evidence, it can be assumed that even these city fathers have low opinion of public schools.

On the whole, it seems that the absence of parent-student-teacher interaction results in a vicious circle, making the education through public schools an issue of grave concern.

Teachers have crucial role in determining the success or failure of students. Unless and until their attitudes are changed in the positive direction, the major social malady of

inequality can not be removed. Compensatory measures to provide various material facilities will not be of much help. Nothing can substitute the human warmth, affection, positive acceptance and encouraging attitude.

5.512      Social : While the physical facilities of the school create the necessary physical environment for the students, the interaction between the teacher and students and among the students themselves builds the social environment of the school. The type of interaction decides whether the social environment is healthy or not. Healthy social environment prepares a congenial ground for the overall growth of the students. The best physical facilities in the absence of healthy social environment are of no use.

The students from diverse social background with different values, attitudes, habits and experiences interact with each other and influence each other. Whether interaction will have a beneficial outcome depends upon contextual factors such as, intimacy, status and the size of group.

The concentration of the higher socio-economic groups is more in private schools and that of lower socio-economic

status students is more in public schools. Lower socio-economic students in private schools, which are in minority achieve higher than the higher socio-economic students of public schools. This may be due to the positive influence of higher socio-economic students. Similarly the lower socio-economic students, who form majority in public schools influence negatively the higher socio-economic students by bringing their achievement level down. This shows the effect of majority on minority. The one school characteristic to which public school students are denied access is classmates from affluent homes (socio-economic status I and II, Table 4.21), Coleman (1966) stresses the importance of social composition of the school as very important factor, highly related to achievement independently of the students' social background. Through interaction, students belonging to lower socio-economic status may develop the motivation, values and skills that are presumed to be necessary mediators for academic achievement.

In teacher student interaction, the role of the teacher becomes a matter of extreme importance as the teacher is the leader, model and hero of the group. A teacher's attitude and behaviour is in turn mimicked by the students. A prejudiced teacher would by his action induce a negative disposition in

his pupils. A prerequisite for the child's attempting to improve his performance is the belief that he has the potential to do well. Whereas, the investigator found that teachers in public schools believe that the students do not have capacity to improve their standard. Study by Wilson (1963) shows that teachers in lower social class schools had grown accustomed to lower levels of performance and were easily satisfied by work of a lower standard. If the performance standard for a person is raised, he will improve in order to meet the new standard. The social atmosphere of the classroom has an important effect on the well being of the pupils regardless of their social background. This shows as to how the social environment of the school affects the expectation of the teacher, and aspiration and motivation of the students.

Since much can not be done to change the social composition of the school, the teacher's role as a model becomes much more important. If the teachers of the public schools do not change their negative attitude, all the Herculean efforts to improve the educational standards and thus bring equality will not succeed.

5.513 Educational : The educational environment of public schools is not satisfactory. Some of the points discussed in the following paragraphs may show as to where the reasons lie.

A. Rigid Educational Programme : Majority of the students coming to public schools are from lower socio-economic strata. These students are not properly oriented towards education, their personal habits like, cleanliness, mannerism etc. and verbal and nonverbal development are not adequate enough to receive ample benefit from schooling. Such students first need proper training in many aspects besides, formal education. When the teacher is under the pressure to complete the prescribed course, he cannot devote time to this. Apart from time, the skill to deal more effectively with the students, patience and more informal interaction are needed. This requires more flexible and open environment where students and teachers can interact with one another without any undue tension. Otherwise this may lead to frustration and disinterest to an extent that the students may dropout (which is a major problem in public schools), and teachers may loose enthusiasm to teach.

B. Suitability of Curriculum and Teaching Methods : The capacity for thinking and learning varies among individuals. This variance has a marked influence on the learning process of a student. While some may show greater proficiency in abstract thinking, others may be more inclined towards concrete thinking. Some can learn verbal skill faster while some non-verbal skill (Riessman, 1962; Naik, 1975). The present day curriculum, with its emphasis on rote learning and theoretical knowledge, does not make adequate provision for activities and experiences more related to the practical aspects of life. It has become more and more examination oriented and has to that extent lost its utility value in the day to day life (Education Commission, 1964-66). There is enough ground to make a study of curriculum in the context of their relevance to the contemporary needs and bring in necessary changes to make them more practical. The teaching methods also should shed their rigidity and should be made more flexible to suit the needs and shortcomings of individual student. This calls for a tremendous responsibility on the part of the teacher who alone would be able to use the discretion to make necessary amends to the teaching methods to suit a particular student. The personal involvement of the teacher will, therefore, be of

paramount importance in making the instructional process a success.

C. School Timings : The students who have initial deficiencies tend to lag behind compared to others. How can this deficiency be compensated? So as to bring the underprivileged group at par with others? Education commission (1964-66) recommended that more time should be given to compensate the earlier deficiencies by increasing (1) working hours, and (2) reducing vacation period. The usual complaints of the teachers about the students coming late and running away from the school, show their unwillingness to stay in the school for longer time. The lack of motivation may be because they feel that the curriculum has no utility value and the timings of the school are not suitable to them. In such a situation lengthening the school hours will not be of much help. What is needed is (1) to orient them towards education, (2) to make them realize the importance of education, (3) to make curriculum more relevant, and (4) to adjust school timings according to their convenience.

D. Administration and Organization : The maximum utilization of resources requires proper management. Any enterprise may collapse if there is no proper administration and organization. This is more so in the field of education, where the fate of the future citizens is being shaped.

Certain aspects of the management of public schools need attention. Administration in the public schools gives more stress to the materials rather than the management of the educational programme. Public schools in Baroda city are having sufficient financial resources and ample physical facilities also. In spite of all this, the poor outcome shows the lack of proper management in utilizing the available resources. In the organizational pattern of public schools, teachers are directly related to the instructional process supervised by the headmasters and inspectors, under the overall control of the administrators. There are enough evidences to throw light on the insincerity of all these.

Inspection reports show that the students of the public schools lack in language development, reading and writing abilities, simple mathematical concepts, discipline and personal cleanliness. One of the prominent educationists of the city found that at the end of the year, one fourth of the course

was not completed. At the time of Second All India Educational Survey (under preparation) it was observed that in the Eastern part of the country the teachers were serving in one State and were taking salary from another State. This is the state of affair in public schools, which shows that there is a kind of unholly alliance between the teachers and authorities. They just abscond and nobody bothers about it. The principals, inspectors and the administrators fail to check the irregularity and insincerity of teachers.

In sum, it can be said that there is no public commitment and close involvement on the part of the teachers, principals, inspectors and administrators, and the failure on their part to provide a viable and committed administrative structure has led to total chaos in the educational field.

5.514 Inequalities in Private Schools : There are extreme variations in the quality of private schools. Some are very good whereas some are very poor. Those which are good have proper management, sufficient financial resources, provide good physical facilities, have highly qualified and experienced staff and are attracting students from upper socio-economic strata. Generally, the students are disciplined, tidy, and have high academic performance.

Those private schools which are poor, lack financial resources, are situated in dingy buildings, have less space, provide poor physical facilities, and have students mostly from lower socio-economic strata. Generally the students show average performance. On the whole the management is efficient, and the principals and the teachers have sense of responsibility and are sincere in their work.

The diagnosis of inequality in education brings forth the fact that the present system of education instead of reducing the gap, breeds inequality. Inequality is found not only between the systems but within the system also. The major drawbacks are unhealthy attitude of teachers and authorities towards students, lack of orientation of parents and students towards education, disproportionate social composition of the schools, rigid curriculum (which does not prepare the students for the post school opportunities, traditional teaching methods, stress on rote learning, ill-suited timings and inadequate utilization of the available resources (due to improper management). It is therefore, suggested to formulate realistic and operational targets of primary education within the limits of available resources.

Primary education has to serve as the foundation for the

later life experiences, by developing certain abilities, like reasoning, problem solving, motor skills etc. where more emphasis should be on how one is learning rather than what one is learning. Students coming to primary schools have different abilities and potentialities, and they may or may not continue their education after this stage. Accordingly, the courses should be framed so that the students are equipped with minimum skills and abilities to face the later experiences of life. Some suggestions are given in this chapter to change the curriculum and teaching methods etc. But along with this it will be necessary to measure the equality of educational opportunity from the new perspective.

5.520 Towards More Realistic Goal of Equality of Educational Opportunity :

The concept of equality of educational opportunity at first sight seems simple which can easily be brought into practice. But, the process of implementation brings forth the inherent complexities of the concept. Perhaps, it is not an exaggeration when one says that it is a widely used but mostly misunderstood concept. In last few decades, many researchers have come forward with wide varieties of definitions, goals

and ways to attain the aims of equality. If the goals for the fulfillment of any noble purpose are not clear, then the efforts may fail leading to a confused state.

The concept of equality has passed through many stages i.e. from equal access to equal output, by giving unequal opportunities (positive discrimination). The widely accepted definition is the one put forward by Coleman (1966), "The role of the schools is to make achievement equal independent of background and to cover some of the differences in the starting point of children from different social groups." Whatever changes in the concept have occurred, all agree that, equality of educational opportunity means, "all should get education, according to their potentialities, and irrespective of their caste, class, sex or race." Many steps ranging from equal access to positive discrimination are taken for the attainment of these goals. It was envisaged earlier that equal access cannot lead to equal output but now it has been realized that positive discrimination does not lead to equal output. Because, still the students coming from lower strata are achieving less everywhere whether the country is advanced or backward. Now, the time has come to give a second thought to it. One has to consider the practical meaning of equality

of educational opportunity and set more realistic goals.

When we talk of equal outcome, we are also sure that the outcome cannot be the same because of the individual differences. In other words, the concept of equal output does not overlook within the group differences and does not imply that all students' achievements come to be identical, but only that the averages for two population groups that begin at different levels come to be identical. Here, some methodological questions arise - First, can one expect the two groups to have identical achievement, when there are differences at the starting point? Perhaps yes - if the basic abilities and potentialities, required for achievement are distributed equally in both the groups.

Second, when within the group differences in potentialities are so extreme, how far are we justified in comparing the groups? Homogeneity is a very important criterion for the comparison of two groups. When within the group differences are so extreme, it may not be proper methodologically to compare the two groups and then to conclude that the effect is not proper. It will be more appropriate if two groups are compared according to their potentialities. But, since potentialities cannot be measured in their true sense, we have to find out

some other means. Individuals are different not only in potentialities but in learning abilities also. Ability to learn varies from slow to fast, motor to verbal, concrete to abstract etc. The present system of education being narrow, rigid and traditional, does not cater to the individual abilities. As a result, many do not get the optimum opportunity to learn. All the compensatory measures may fall short if educational programme does not take into consideration the differences in abilities and potentialities.

To sum up the discussion, present educational system with its traditional set up is not flexible enough to take into consideration the differences in potentialities, abilities, needs and interests of the students as well as the post school opportunities. This drawback is prevailing in public as well as private systems of schools. Taking into consideration the limitations like (1) inability to measure potentialities, (2) streaming the groups according to various abilities, and (3) limited economical resources, the educational system should be planned in such a way as to ensure that the potentialities and abilities of the students grow to the optimum level.