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The Role of State as an Active and Informal Agency of Education

Himashree Patowary

Research Scholar, Dept. of political science, Assam University, Silchar

Abstract

In the words of Aristotle, “The state is a union of families and villagers having for an end, a perfect and self-sufficing life by which we mean a happy and honourable life. A state exists for the sake of good life and not for the sake of life only”.

This definition has given a clear vision on the relationship between man and the state. The state, in modern times is regarded as an important agency or in other words a human organization for maintaining disciplined and a well-arranged environment for education.

In contemporary world, the functions to be performed by a state are going wide day by day. So, one of the functions of a state is to give proper education and to create a proper environment for imparting knowledge among people. In a democratic country the role of state in spreading education is very much important. These states provide educational aims and objectives, open schools and colleges; arrange the syllabus and curriculum, plan, control and direct educational activities for their citizens. Performing these functions the modern states can create such an environment in every society where every citizen can be made educated enough to understand the complexities of modern world.

Besides these, the modern world can make proper arrangements for research and experiments in various fields of education. For this a state should establish such institutions and organisations to inspire the eligible individuals.

In a big country like India, the state makes educational policies based on needs, ideals and aspirations of the people. For this there are various administrative units are established. Each such unit maintains an educational department of its own for providing liberal and vocational

education up to highest standard. States also maintain one or more universities for higher education. Thus, it can be said that a state exerts its direct and indirect influences on all aspects of education.

Introduction: The state is the universal and most powerful of all the social institutions created by man. It is both natural and necessary institutions for the good of human beings. It is the creation of man for the welfare of human society. Man hands over all the powers to the state so that it can organize people. Above all, it can be said that the state is the ultimate source through which every human being can get ultimate prosperity and development. It is worth mentioning that modern states are the democratic welfare states. So, in modern times the main function of these states is to look after all the concerns of a human life.

But instead of doing further discussion on the functions of a state, here it will be more meaningful if I point out the educational functions of the state. Before that, we should be cleared about what the word education lies.

1. According to one section of philosophers, education is the process through which the innate qualities and capabilities of an individual can be drawn out and develops his personality.
2. According to some education is a process through which human behaviour can be modified.

3. On the other hand, there is a section of philosophers who believes that education is a process of adjustment to the environment and society.

But after all it can be said that Education is a lifelong process. It begins immediately after a child is born and continues till death. Education is the process through which all round development of each and every individual is possible. Education may be formal, non-formal and informal.

Formal education is that which is consciously and deliberately planned for the modification of behaviour with a particular end in view. This type of education is imparted through schools, colleges or other institutions, specifically established and maintained for this purpose.

The education imparted through various correspondence courses is called non-formal education. Those who cannot join formal educational institutions they can get proper guidance or knowledge through postal courses, state elite programmed or open universities and lastly about informal education it can be said that it is not pre-planned. It is that type of education which the children get while moving and living in the community or society with other persons. There are



various informal agencies, such as, family, society, community, religious institutions and state, through which everybody can get knowledge on in other words proper education.

Thus, an important mention can be done that the state is informal but an active agency of education. It performs some basic important educational functions. Those can be mentioned as follows---

1. A state provides educational aims and objectives: In today's world, most of the countries have accepted democracy as their ultimate way of socio-political development. So, every state wants to cultivate the democratic qualities among the citizens through education with the help of schools, colleges or universities. That is why every state lays down clear-cut aims and objectives and guidelines for all the educational institutions. Because it is seen that the main aim of a modern state is to produce democratic qualities and democratic thinking.
2. Arrangement of education of different levels: Every modern state makes arrangements of whole education system in different levels such as pre-primary, primary, secondary, university, technical, commercial, professional etc., for the welfare of the community as a whole. It also

makes provisions for education of all types such as liberal, scientific, vocational to train or prepare different individuals for different jobs and vocations. For this purpose, the states open high or higher secondary and multipurpose school, technical and commercial institutions.

3. Framing of curriculum and syllabus: Modern states frame specific curricula and suggest definite syllabus for different levels of education system to maintain uniformity and standard throughout the country as a whole. It also modifies or re-constructs a curricula and syllabus according to the needs of the individuals. For this every state takes help from different specialists and experts and sometimes also from the provincial govts.
4. Planning, directing and controlling educational activities: State controlled education is now necessary for every modern state because it makes the whole education system more clear and purposeful. So, state directs, controls the whole educational activities. It also makes plans for the better management and organization of educational activities. Of course, in a big country like India, different provinces maintain their own education system. Such unit also maintains one or more



- universities for providing higher education.
5. Education for all: Today, every state is responsible to provide basic education to all, as the educational rights are being made fundamental rights in a country like India. In India, both the govts. (Central and state) and the consultation are equally responsible for the preservation and maintenance of suitable environment where everybody can acquire knowledge.
 6. Arrangements for educational research and experiments: States make proper arrangements for educational research and experiments in various fields to modify syllabus or curriculum or any other problems relating education. For this purposes, various governmental and semi-governmental bodies and organizations has been established.
 7. It organizes seminars and workshops: The state also organizes seminars and workshops for student's teachers and any other personals who have relation with education department.
 8. Appointment of various committees and commissions: States also appoint committees and commissions headed by various experts and specialists to do survey and discuss the various concerns and perspectives of education.
 9. Adult education campaign- There are many citizens in a state who could not get education in their childhood due to certain reasons. So, the states can maintain some adult education canters to provide them education through evening or night classes on non-formal or informal basis.
 10. Self-reliance through education: One of the primary responsibilities of a modern state is to make every citizen independent in every respects of life. For this states introduce variety of vocational and professional courses along with the education of pure academic subjects.
 11. Training and appointment of teachers: Teaching is a critically challenging job not a play. It requires especially some trained teachers. Such training is given by the state through some specialised agencies and when they are fully trained, they are appointed to further the mission to its final stage.
 12. Scholarship facilities to talented and poor students: States give scholarship to maintain high standard of education to talented and poor students.
 13. Value education: States provide value education to its citizens through various beliefs



regarding religion, society or communities, moral attitudes, philosophies of life, political and social ideologies, culture and civilization in the courses of schools, colleges or universities. In order to preserve, maintain and advance the position of our country comprehensive programme of value education is important.

14. Basic and compulsory education to all: Most of the countries like India provide basic and compulsory education to all of their citizens, so that everybody can get proper education to live peacefully in a society.

Basically above mentioned functions are performed by every modern state. But with the emergence of the concepts of citizenship, democracy, self-determination, self-rule the role of state as an agent of education is going wide. The most important thing is that in this globalised world, where the world is emerging like a global village, the whole concepts of citizenship, rights, freedoms are replaced by the words universal or global citizenship, brotherhood, peaceful co-existence, mutual love for each other, inter dependence etc.. So, here the role of state towards education has been broadened. For this the state should introduce quality syllabus and curricula in every schools, colleges or universities which can cultivate

the democratic qualities like understanding, co-operation, tolerance, among the citizens. So, it is the responsibility of the state to spread education to give knowledge on these concepts.

In a big modern country like India, where diversities are prevalent in every concern of Indian people, the particular state should have a consciousness to spread education in such a way that unity among the diversities can be established. It is very important for such a big country to unite the people in every concern. So, the state should arrange every levels or departments in such a strict manner that it can bring the feeling of oneness, feeling of sameness, equality and integration. For this, every democratic country should organise same activities or extra-curricular activities in schools or colleges. In India, the 'Sampurnanand Committee on Educational Integration' lays great emphasis on the daily assembly in schools and colleges, where the head of the institutions must take a talk on moral side of student life, on the past leaders of our country, on the life, society, culture of our country of our provinces and social and political aspects of our national life. But it should be mentioned here that all these should be arranged or organized by the state so that it can become impartial and disciplined based on the rules and principles prepared

by the state taking help from the commissions or committees headed by different scholars, experts and specialists.

In this discussion, a new angle has come out i.e. the relationship of inter-dependence between state and education to fulfil the basic needs of human beings. Because both state and education are the two basic conditions for the welfare of the people.

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There are three approaches supported by the philosophers regarding the relationship between state and education. Those approaches can be mentioned as follows-

1. Individualism: According to the great individualism John Locke, J.S.Mill, the only duty of the state is to protect and guide its people not to interfere in their personal affairs. So as education is entirely a personal matter, the state should not interfere in the sphere of education at all.
2. Collectivism: Mathew Arnold, Ruskin, Marx are the great supporters of collectivism. According to this ideology, the function of the state is not to protect it's citizens from

external or internal dangers only but also control their behaviour and activities through education in the larger interest of the state.

3. Golden mean approach: This approach is regard as the middle path of both individualism and collectivism. According to the supporters of this approach the task of education is so important for the individual as well as for the state that there must be full co-operation and co-ordination among all the agencies of education such as, family, school, church, community and it is only the state which can play this dynamic role as it has a superstructure and supreme legal powers. All the social institutions have the power to perform their educational functions, with full freedom, but supervision is necessary for establishing social justice which is basically done by a state.

Thus, it has been cleared that the modern theories regarding human societies for development have accepted the concept of state control education. The supporters of this concept argue that is necessary for----

1. The universalization of education:-
According to these supporters state can spread education among the masses in a systematic way.



2. The success of democracy:-
The supporters also believe that education is one of the important conditions which help democracy to be successful.

3. Maintaining national integration and unity:-
It is important to maintain national integration and unity among the diversities of a particular state. But it is possible through quality education under the supervision of a state.

4. The proper understanding of the needs and requirements:-
A state can understand the basic needs and requirements of its own and of its people.

5. Spreading uniform education:-
Uniform education and education of national character is possible only when education is centralised and controlled by a state.

But it is necessary to mention here that too much control of a state over education may-----

1. Politicize the whole education system where the individuals cannot get proper knowledge;
2. Indoctrinate its own ideology in to the minds of children

ignoring the basic values of human society;

3. Neglect the individuality of children and crush the creativity of them;
4. Create such environment where all round development of all children may not be possible;
5. Demoralize those children to receive education of their choice and interests.

However, a structured, disciplined and democratic control of a modern welfare state over education can create such an environment where all the people can get proper education peacefully. In such a state people can enjoy all their rights, freedoms and facilities properly. So, it can be said that the relationship between state and education is the relationship of interdependence. Every modern state should be responsible for spreading education among the people democratically so that everybody can have the knowledge of democratic principles and qualities.

Thus, this discussion has proved that the state is an important informal and active agent of education.



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