

Kothari Commission  
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## The Miscellaneous

### Basic Education

The Kothari Commission made the following observations regarding Basic Education.

"The movement of basic education launched by Mahatma Gandhi more than 25 years ago, proposing a new type of elementary education for the nation which would centre round some form of manual and productive work and have intimate links with the life of the community, was a landmark in the history of education India. It was a revolt against the sterile, book-centered, examination oriented system of education that had developed along traditional lines during several decades of British rule. It created a national ferment which may not have transformed the quality of education at the primary stage, but which has certainly left its impact on educational thought and practice in a much wider sphere. We believe that the essential elements of the system are fundamentally sound, and that with necessary modifications these can form a part of education, not only at the primary stage, but at all stages in our national system. These elements are (1) Productive activity of education; (2) Correlation of the curriculum with the productive activity and the physical and social environment; and (3) Intimate contact between the school and the local community".

The Commission observed, "the essential principles of basic education are so important that they should guide and shape the

educational system at all levels. This is the essence of our proposals; and in view of this we are not in favour of designating anyone stage of education as basic education."

***Evaluation of the Recommendations.*** Whereas in Basic Education, only a few crafts were followed, modern education has to adjust itself to the needs of a society undergoing change with the help of science and technology. Thus work experience has to be forward-looking in keeping with the character of the new social order.

In the new organisational pattern of education which the Commission proposed, there is no stage designated as Basic Education. Many people felt that it was wrong on the part of the Commission to delete the word Basic Education.

There is no denying the fact that in the thinking of some people Basic Education is a cheap type of education. What is important is good education and the name is immaterial. Following the suggestion of the Commission referred to above, the enthusiasm regarding Basic Education has waned. The National Institute of Basic Education was wound up in 1969. No funds were earmarked for this type of education in the Fourth and subsequent Five Year Plans. If the recommendations of the Kothari Commission are any indication, Basic Education will only remain a matter of educational history.

### **Common School System**

This chapter proposes an organisation for the creation of a common school system of public education embracing all categories of institutions and all stages of education. It advocates the following steps:

1. The discrimination between teachers working under different managements should be abolished.
2. Tuition fee should be abolished in a phased programme.
3. The roles of local bodies and private organisations should be equated with those of State Governments.
4. The neighbourhood school plans should be adopted so as to eliminate the segregation between schools for the privileged and the unprivileged.

It advocates that the present social segregation in primary and secondary schools should be eliminated and that these schools should be attended by all children in the neighbourhood without exception. Provision is made for the phasing of this programme.