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Title

**BRITISH EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ITS IMPACT IN
TAMILNADU**

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Introduction:

Tamil Nadu had an ancient and effective Gurukula system of education. It led to the origin of Monitorial System. “ The system was in the nature of an informal approach to the problem of making available and adequate supply of teachers for the indigenous- educational institutions. It was based on the principle of ‘mutual instruction’, and was worked out in practice by splitting up a school or a class into a number of homogeneous groups and by placing each group under the charge of a promising and superior pupil called the ‘monitor’. The duties of the monitor were fairly comprehensive, for he was not only expected to look after the routine organizational and disciplinary matters but had also impart individual as well as collective instruction to the pupils in his group and to keep the teacher informed of their day-today work and progress in studies. Through such a system of mutual instruction, the monitors naturally gained, in due course of time, some proficiency in teaching and class-control which enabled them to teach in an independent institution of their own, if, after completing their education, they chose teaching as the profession of their life”.¹

Beginning of the Modern system:

The Gurukula system was very well understood and appreciated by the officials of the East India Company. As a result of which what is now treated as bell and Lancaster system,² emerged. Dr. Andrew Bell, first superintendent of the Madras Military Asylum made use of this method, as early as 1789. The same system was successfully adopted in England with a view to spreading elementary education at lower cost. This system had been called by different names - Madras Lancastrian, Pestalozzian, Glasgow, Monitorial and Pupil-teacher system. However teacher training was first imparted by missionaries who came to India.

Contribution of the Missionaries:

The introduction of modern education awakened the people from ignorance, superstitious beliefs and several social evils. The credit goes to the Christian missionaries who were the pioneers of western education in South India. The Portuguese came to India not only for trade but also to spread Christianity among the people.³ They started schools in Goa and Calicut with

the primary intention of educating their new converts. These schools taught reading, writing in Portuguese as well as in the regional language besides the principles of Catholic religion.⁴

The honour of being the first Protestant Missionaries to work in the territories of the East India Company goes to the Danish Mission or Tranquebar Mission. After the Danish, the Christian missionaries came to India and established many schools and colleges all over Indian especially more in Tamil Nadu.⁵ The various missionaries like Roman Catholic Mission, London Mission, American Arcot Mission, Scottish Mission, Wesley Mission, etc., were noted for their contribution to education. Missionary work was extremely widespread in Madras Presidency mostly, because the missionaries came to south early and started their work on education partly because the extreme plight of the Depressed Classes in the south provided them a more faithful ground for conversion.

The Roman Catholic fathers contributed to the education of Indian girls and boys while the Roman Catholic nuns performed a notable work as teachers of Indian girls. In South India they started their pioneering work in improving girls education. St. Francis Xavier's High School in Palayamcottai became the practicing school for St. Xavier Training College which was opened in 1950 by the Society of Jesus, which is a part of the Roman Catholic mission.⁶

Missionary Education in South India began first at Tranquebar by two young pioneering Danish Missionaries Bartholomeaus Ziegenbalg and Henry Plustschau. They established an institution in 1716 AD for the training of teachers to be employed in the Charity Schools. These schools were opened for the children who became Christians. The mission also started separate schools for children of Muslim community.⁷ The missionaries indirectly brought good results to the natives. They sought the help of the native teachers to teach in the schools founded by them in which they also taught under their able guidance. The native teachers learnt systematic methods of teachings and western methods of education were slowly imbibed.⁸ Inspired by the Danish missionaries, in 1786 John Sullivan, the Resident at Tanjore suggested a plan for the establishment of English schools meant for the upper caste children. John Sullivan took up this task in order to break down the religious prejudice, which existed against the missionaries. As a result, three English schools were set up in 1785 AD., at Tanjore, Ramnad and Sivagangai.⁹

As for as the foreign missionaries were concerned the American Board of Commissioners was the first American missionary society to work in India for the development of education and

more particularly women education. Women education in Nellore began quietly with a school opened by Mrs. Day on her bungalow veranda in 1841 A.D. From that small beginning had grown up into a big chain of institutions viz., a training school for women, a model school, and a high school for girls and a bible training school in different part of Madras Presidency.¹⁰ A training school for women was started in 1842, in the Madurai District for the general and special education of women, Rs. 12,000 grant was given towards the building for the American mission training school for women in Madura by the Government of Madras Presidency under the provision of the Charter Act of 1813.¹¹

Rev. John Anderson arrived in Madras in 1837. He belongs to Scottish Presbyterian mission. The Church of Scotland mission had under its management five higher-grade elementary schools for girls in the city of Madras at George Town, Triplicane, Tana Street and Sundaram Pillai Street, Purasawalkam and Veperiy with a staff of sixty trained teachers and 1500 pupils. To encourage trained teachers the management initiated a provident fund for the benefit of these teachers in 1814.¹² In 1804 the London Mission opened schools in South India. In due course it maintained 317 elementary (vernacular) schools containing 7,802 pupils of whom 5,116 were Christian and 2686 were Hindus. This society had a training institution at Palayamcottai.¹³ Later this training institution was named as ST. Ignatius College of Education.¹⁴

Women Mission:

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries female education was resisted. The native conditioned by the religious superstition did not allow their girl children to get to school. By this time, women missionaries came to India as educationist. They took up the cause of removing illiteracy of women, in which they were successful in course of time. The Government female Normal school (later known as the Presidency Training School) was established by the women mission in 1870 A.D. In 1881 AD, Mr and Mrs Wyatt opened the first Post Graduate Training School for women teachers at Trichinopoly. There were seventeen training schools for women with 342 pupils in the Madras Presidency Among them St. John's Female Training Institution, Nazareth and Sarah Toker Institution Madras occupied a prominent position.¹⁵ Although the women mission did nothing for the secondary teacher education, its work got recognition in the field of teacher education.

English Mission:

Besides the missionary's efforts in the field of teacher training, East India Company gradually felt the need of doing something in this direction. In 1773, the first Normal School, a school specially meant for pupil-teacher was set up at Serampore (Bengal) as a collaborative effort between the Danish and English missionaries. Special mention should be made for about the Calcutta Central School for girls organized by the Calcutta Ladies Society for training female teachers. Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of the Madras Presidency, (in his minute of May 10, 1826), firmly expressed his belief that no educational progress could be made in the province without "a body of better instructed teachers". He, therefore advocated the establishment of a central school for the education of teachers.¹⁶ Soon Government institutions for teaching teachers were established in the three Presidencies and Madras has the distinction of having opened the first Normal School under the Government management and financed by it. This institution later developed into the present Presidency College.

In 1847, the Bombay Presidency had its first Normal School in the Eliphinstone Institution. Further a Normal School was opened by Alexander Duff for the first time with a practicing school at Calcutta in 1849. In these Government institutions, all candidates were given stipends and employment after training. There was still great scarcity of teachers and references to teacher training were often found in the letters of Governors and of the Court of Directors of the East India Company.¹⁷

Wood's Despatch – 1854:

The Wood's Despatch of 1854 was the first categorical and comprehensive declaration of the education policy of the Court of Directors. It was an important landmark in the history of education in modern India. Realising the necessity of having an adequate supply of training teachers, the Despatch recommended for the establishment of trained schools and classes for masters in each Presidency in India.¹⁸ As a result of the Wood's Despatch's recommendation, the first secondary training school for teachers in the country was established on 1st March, 1856 in Madras.¹⁹ It was then known as Madras Normal School and at present, it is known as the

Teacher's College, Saidapet. The Stanley's Despatch of 1859 rectified the defects of the Wood's Despatch. It laid greater emphasis on teacher education and the new grand-in-code. Under this code no student could be admitted to a recognized training school of any grade without having passed the general educational test of the grade. The recommendation caused increase of training institutions rapidly in the forth coming years. From the statistics available for the year 1882, at all India level it is revealed "there were 166 Normal Schools in the country in the said year, they had an enrolment of 3,886 trainees, and were run at the cost of Rs.4 lakh per annum."²⁰

Indian Education Commission, 1882:

The Education Commission of 1882, with its report published in 1884, made a significant contribution to the development of teacher training in the country. It urged the need for increasing the number of normal schools, So that they might be widely spread throughout the country. The commission's report drew the attention of the British Government in India for the first time to the necessity of providing training facilities also to the teachers of secondary school. The recommendation had the desired effect. The number of training schools for men in Madras Presidency, which had largely increased in the two previous years, fell from 48 with 1,115 pupils to 44 with 1,140 pupils in 1889. They were maintained at a cost of Rs.1, 10,212 of which Rs.41712 were from provincial revenues and Rs.50, 281 from local funds. The Madras Normal School under the 'name of the Teacher's college, Saidapet was affiliated to the University of Madras for a new degree in teaching. At the close of the year, 1887 nine B.A., graduates were being prepared for the degree; and there were 35 other students under training who had passed either the Matriculation or the first Art Examination. The institution was maintained at a cost of Rs. 12,282 from the provincial revenues and nothing was collected from the student teacher in the name of fees. To admit student, teachers in the training schools and college, the untrained teacher working in schools and fresh graduates had been given chance. After completing the courses successfully, they were appointed as secondary school teachers. In 1886,511 secondary schools teachers were recruited. Among the a few hundreds were reappointed (untrained teachers who completed the course) and the remaining were appointed as fresh recruits.²¹

Indian Education Policy, 1904:

A significant development took place in the field of secondary teacher education during the twentieth century. During the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, the Governor General-in-Council on the 11th March 1904, issued the Indian Education Policy, by its Resolution, the Government of India laid down the following guiding principles for the further development of teacher education in the country.

1. The training colleges for secondary teacher should receive more attention from the Government for their qualitative improvement.
2. One year training course, leading to a university degree or diploma should be instituted for graduates.
3. The training imparted in training institutions should be realistic in terms of the actual needs and conditions of the schools in which the students would be required to teach after the completion of their training.

The policy appreciated the need for in-service education of teachers and closer contact between the schools and training institutions. The recommendation paved the way for the much-needed qualitative improvement in the field of secondary education.²² The Government Resolution on Educational Policy, 1913, stated, “eventually, under modern system of education, no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate that has qualified him to do so”.²³ The policy insisted the government to introduce reforms in education including the change of science and oriental studies curricula than the extension and improvement of the training of teachers for both primary and secondary schools. However, from this period onwards teacher education had taken definite shape and the subsequent period saw only the modification and intensification of the pattern and reforms introduced by the efforts of the several Education Commissions.

Sadler Commission, 1917:

The Government of India appointed the Sadler Commission, headed by Sir Michael Sadler in 1917. It made the following recommendations for improving the training of secondary teachers:

1. Introduction of education as a subject of study at inter-mediate and B.A. level.

2. Setting up of an experimental high school attached to a training college.
3. Organization of department of education at the university level which should issue periodicals and offer research facilities in Indian Education.
4. The public to be informed about the aim and progress of education through lectures.
5. Institution of a Master's degree in education.

Since 1921, the Government of India transferred the education department to Provincial Subject due to the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms Act. Even though the Government's retrenchment policy and the Non-cooperation Movement had adverse effects on education, two training colleges for women in the Madras Presidency came into being. They were Lady Willingdon Training College (1923) and the St. Christopher's Training college (1923) of Madras.²⁴

The Hartog Committee, 1929:

The Hartog Committee of 1929 paid special attention to the problem of training of primary teachers. As a result of the committee's recommendation, the system of teacher training was gradually reoriented on more progressive line. The committee suggested some changes in the teacher education. Accordingly University Departments of Education were established at certain places. Research degrees in education were too instituted. Refresher courses for in service teachers began to be organized. Also attempts were made to enhance the efficiency of training institutions equipping the laboratories, enriching the libraries, providing them with their own practicing schools and employing more qualified staff.²⁵

The Wood and Abbot Report, 1938:

Since 1931 there had been a slump in the economic field. This had resulted into a good deal of unemployment. A large number of university graduates were not securing employment. To eradicate it through education a committee was constituted consisting of two educationists namely Mr. Abbot, the Chief Inspector of Technical Schools and Mr. S.H.Wood, the Director of

Intelligence of Board of Education, England. The committee toured the north India alone. It examined the existing system of teacher education also. It suggested that pre-employment preparation of pupil teacher in a normal school or a training college. The report stressed the need of organizing refresher courses for practicing teachers.²⁶ The report, for the first time, realized the need for the teacher to have an understanding of and* an insight into social responsibilities in wider terms than that of mere passing of information. The setting of vocational teachers college was proposed.²⁷

By this time Gandhiji spread the importance of basic education called Wardha Scheme of Education. A Basic Training college was established in Madras in 1936, called Baler Kabir Nilayam. It was a real training institute for nursery school teachers, which was visited in 1939 by Maria Montessori, the founder of Kinder Garden Education.²⁸ In 1937, the Meston Training College, Madras was established. This college imparts education exclusively for men. The St. Ann's Training College, Mangalore started functioning from 1943 with twenty students on the roll. It was the first training college in the Madras University area to be found outside Madras City.²⁹ In July 1945 the Government Training College, Trichur was opened. The college had the full strength of 80 students in the third year of its inception.³⁰

On the eve of the Second World War, an educational commission was created under the chairmanship of Sargent. The Sargent Report of 1944 gave more importance to the teacher training at primary stage. The existence of six training Colleges were not able to produce the required number of trained teachers. At the same time, in the nation, training facilities were provided especially at the secondary training college with intake of nearly 3000 trainees. Despite this the numbers of untrained teachers were very large in 1947. Nearly 58.7% were untrained teachers out of about 5.6 lakh teachers available in the country.³¹ So the burden was laid on the shoulders of training schools to supply trained teachers for secondary schools in order to rid of the dearth prevailing in Secondary schools.

Conclusion:

As the country was under the suzerainty of the British, one could not expect that they should have ruled for the betterment of people. However they took utmost care for the promotion of teacher education through education commissions appointed in different period. The Christian missions, the vehicle for the development of imperialism, opened eyes of the people by opening education institutions. Their work could not be under estimated in this regard. The six training colleges were not able to supply the required number of trained teachers. Filling up the backlogs, the training schools had supplied the required number up to 1950 AD.

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