



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

EDUCATION DURING BRITISH COLONIAL RULE

Dr. PRIYA SAROJ¹

Associate Professor,

University Institute of Legal Studies,
Chandigarh University,
Mohali (Punjab), India

Dr. Namah²,

Assistant Professor,

University Institute of Legal Studies,
Chandigarh University,
Mohali (Punjab), India.

Abstract:

Amidst of the unpredictable and unsettled circumstances during the early days of business administration, little significant attention could be paid to subject instruction. Their efforts were focused on establishing a traditional Mohammedan or Sanskrit college. Lord Cornwallis and Warren Hastings both took steps in this direction. Hastings established the first college in Bengal in 1782 to promote the study of Arabic and Persian. In 1791, a comparable college was founded in Banaras for the study of Hindu law, literature, and religion. New influences, on the other hand, were quickly at work. Under the control of the English-speaking population, knowing English became a source of income for Hindus. In Presidency towns, there was a demand for English teaching. The old and new schools were fighting each other. The orientalist wanted to keep studying oriental classics using methods that were native to the country. The Anglicists argued that all instructions should be presented in English and should reflect current thinking. Lord Macaulay was a well-known Anglicist supporter. In a different minute, he voiced his strong dislike for oriental learning. His allure was unstoppable. Lord William Bentinck decided that one of the key goals of British authority should be to promote European lore. In 1834, the Governor-General issued a resolution emphasising the importance of English education over oriental instruction. In 1839, Lord Auckland's Minute put an end to the debate.

Key Words: The Presidency Towns, Legislative Assembly, Local self- government, Municipalities, provincial patriotism

Introduction:

In 1854 the education of the whole people of India was accepted as a duty of the state. The Board of Directors issued their famous Dispatch which is described as the 'Charter of Education in India'. A number of changes were proposed: The constitution of a separate department for the administration of Education.; the institutions of universities in the Presidency Towns.; the establishment of institutions for training all classes of people. ; the maintenance of existing government colleges and high schools and a further increase of their numbers; the establishment of new Middle Schools; increased attention to schools for elementary education ;and the introduction of a system of grant-in-aid. The mother Tongue was to be the medium of instruction in lower branches and English in the higher. There was to be complete religious toleration. Female education was to be

cordially supported and encouraged by the Government. Sir Charles wood was mainly responsible for sending this Dispatch. Another dispatch was published in 1859. It confirmed the principles of the earlier dispatch, but pointed out that elementary education was not being properly promoted. The system of grant-in -aid was not thought desirable or expedient with reference to primary education, and it was recommended that the Government should provide for such education more directly through the instrumentality of its officers. A special cess upon land for primary education was also recommended for the consideration of the Government. Universities were established in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta in 1857, in the Punjab in 1882 and in Allahabad in 1887. They were merely examining bodies. The growth of schools and colleges proceeded rapidly, and by 1882 there were more than two and a quarter million pupils under instruction of public bodies. The commission of 1882 again made useful recommendations and advised increased reliance upon private effort. According to the principles of Local self- government, Municipalities and Local Boards were given considerable liberty in the management of primary schools. In 1898, a review of the situation was made and a searching enquiry followed. A conference of educationalists was convened in Shimla in 1901. A commission to investigate and report on working of universities was appointed in 1902.

The Act of 1904: The Indian University Act was passed in 1904 by Lord Curzon's government to give effect to the recommendations of the commission. The Act specially recognized the wider functions of the universities including instructions of students and appointment of professors and lecturers and equipment of laboratories and museums for that purpose. Territorial limits were assigned to each University. Conditions for the affiliation of colleges were prescribed. A systematic inspection of colleges by the university was established. The term of a Senator's office was prescribed to be five years, instead of for life as before. The number of Senators and Syndics was limited, and a majority of nominated members was created. New regulations of five universities were promulgated in 1905-06. They were all affiliating universities any number of colleges could be affiliated to them. They soon ceased to be living organisms, since their constituent parts- the different colleges scattered over the province – contributing nothing to the common life of the university. A Resolution of the Government of India in 1913 recognized the necessity of restricting the area over which affiliating universities had control. The institution of teaching and residential universities was recommended. The strength of communal feeling and the growth of local and provincial patriotism helped in the development of the new policy. Patna, Lucknow, Rangoon -, Dacca and Delhi became university centers. So did Banaras and Aligarh. These are not only examining but teaching bodies and their territorial jurisdiction is strictly limited.

The Calcutta Commission: The Calcutta University Commission, presided over by Sir Michael Sadler, made their voluminous report in 1919. They recommended a complete recognition of system of higher education in Bengal. The institution of new types of bodies known as Intermediate colleges was suggested. To them was to be transferred secondary and intermediate education. Most of the recommendations of the commission were, however, left unheeded when, after the Montford reforms, the Calcutta University was transferred to the government of Bengal, and action was taken by the latter to modify the affairs of the university in 1921. After the Montford Reforms, education became a Transferred subject, administrated by Ministers responsible to the Legislature. Great hopes were entertained about the acceleration of the progress of education under the new conditions. They were not fulfilled for various reasons, chiefly owing to lack of funds. Endeavors were made to combat illiteracy by providing for free and compulsory Education in primary schools. The Bombay council took the lead in this matter by passing the Compulsory Education Act, and other provinces passed similar measures. The general control of the university system was planned within the province of the local Governments. Many of them passed legislation to modify the constitution of the older institutions or to create new ones altogether. The Allahabad University was recognized. The Madras University was also remodeled. New universities were established at Nagpur and Agra and agitation for another in Rajputana is being carried on. There are now 15 Universities in British India and 3 in Indian states.

Bombay University Reforms: A special committee was appointed to suggest measures of reforms. Its report made various recommendations about the grouping together of colleges in the city of Bombay so as to develop a university area. It recommended an alteration of the constitution of the university in order to make it more democratic and elective. Separate universities for Poona in the first instance and for Gujrat, Karnataka and Sind in course of time were also recommended. The question of the determination of the medium of instruction was left to the universities themselves. Action upon the report was taken by the Legislature.

The Bombay University Act: The Bombay University Act was passed in 1928 considerably altered the constitution of the university. The Senate, which till then considered an overwhelmingly large nominated majority, has now been given a predominately elective character. In addition to the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and some Government officials who are ex-officio members, the Senate consists of members elected by different constituencies. Principles of colleges and university professors elect thirteen members; college professors (including principals) elect twenty; headmasters of schools elect five. Public associations or bodies in British India like municipalities, the Indian Merchants' chamber, the Mill owners' Association, District Local bodies. etc., send another fifteen. Recognized graduates of the other universities elect twenty-five. Faculties constituted by the Senate elect ten. Lastly, the Bombay Legislative Assembly sent five representatives, one of whom is the member of the university. As Sind is no longer a part of Bombay, its Legislature is at present without a representative on the Senate. The total number of elected members thus reaches ninety-three. The number of those nominated by the chancellor is limited to forty. The executive government of the university is vested as before in the syndicate, which now consists of the Vice-chancellor, the Rector if any the Director of Public Instruction, seven persons elected by the Academic Council from itself and nine persons elected by the Senate from those of its members who are not principles, professors or headmasters. The term of the Syndicates is three years and of the Senate five years. A new body called the Academic Council has been created to regulate purely educational matters like teaching and examination, course of study, scholarships and prizes etc. It consists of the Vice-Chancellor, Dean of Faculties, representatives of the university professors, Head masters and Board of studies, in addition to five representatives of the Senate.

After Provincial Autonomy: After the advent of provincial autonomy, educational activity has received a great impetus in all the provinces. Many committees have been appointed during the last two years to consider various problems and action is being taken on their reports. The provision of adequate arrangements for physical instruction. Establishment of Secondary education Boards, a complete overhauling of courses of studies and text books, reorganization of grant-in -aid scheme, introduction of free and compulsory primary education, planning a various mass drive against illiteracy, closing of Government high schools and colleges when their work can be found to capable of being easily taken by private institutions, encouraging and actively helping schemes of adult education, making the mother- tongue the medium of instruction, are matters which are very seriously engaging the attention of ministers. The Wardha scheme has suggested radical alterations in the ideas and methods of education, and experiments based on those suggestions are being carried out in many provinces.

Conclusion:

Thus, the education of masses was neglected by the British, which is evident from the fact that the literacy rate in India was 16% at the time of independence. The education policy whichever was introduced was only to produce "cheap clerks" who could help them in administration in their pursuit of economic subjugation of India. And the only good it did to India was, it introduced the modern principles of democracy, equality, rule of law and soon the educated Indian came to know about the hypocrisy of British and began a fight for more rights which slowly culminated into a large scale freedom struggle for independence through establishment of various organizations by the educated middle class, one such organization was the Indian National Congress.

END NOTES:

Education--1: Colonial Education Policy and the Decline of
Colonial Education

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