Educational Development In India During Pre-Independence Period

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Abstract
The earliest definite figures in respect of literacy in India are available in the report of William Adam. According to him, the literacy rate in India in 1836-37 was about 6 percent. The English rulers had little concern for the education of adults. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in its fourth meeting in December 1938, appointed an Adult Education Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Syed Mahmud. The committee stressed the importance of adult literacy, need for training of literacy teachers, motivation of adults, use of audio-visual media in teaching and efforts for retention of literacy and continuing education. Gandhiji considered illiteracy as a sin and shame and demanded solving the same at the earliest through concerted efforts. He suggested in his constructive programme two forms of education viz. Basic Education and Adult Education. The second half of the 19th century laid strong foundations in the enlightenment and empowerment role of education leading to the massive educational activities in Travancore. Travancore government entered significantly into the field of education during the administration of Dewan T. Madhava Rao. Government intervention in the field of female education begins only from 1860s. It was a neglected area except for a few boarding schools run by the Missionaries during 1819-22. Missionary efforts made an impact on the attitude of the society towards female education.

INTRODUCTION
A review of the expansion in educational facilities during pre-independence period calls forth a brief description of the educational system during pre-British period. Prior to the establishment of British
rule education was traditional and caste determined and there was no
general education. Education was centered in royal courts, temples and
families of aristocrats, artisans and peasants. But even during pre-British
period, which ended in Kerala in 1793, educational facilities have been
quite widespread in every region of the area. However, such facilities
were not equally accessible to all the sections of the people and
educational opportunities in those days were determined by the pattern
of distribution of ownership and control of land, the basic means of
production. The higher castes of Hinduism, such as the Brahmins and
the Nairs were the owners of land and they had well-developed
institutional arrangements for the education of their children. Although,
education was the monopoly of the Brahmins, it was within the reach of
all the socially privileged sections of the population. But, vast sections
of the society belonging to the 'depressed classes' of the Hindu Society
did not enjoy in general any facilities for education and remained
steeped in illiteracy. The education received by the agrestic slave castes
consisted little else than their folk-lore and skills handed down from
generation to generation by word of mouth. Thus during the Pre- British
period, Kerala had an indigenous system of education characterized by
tradition, caste determination and religious ideas.

**Objectives of the study**
1. To identify the important landmarks in the early developments
   relating to education in the constituent areas of Travancore, Cochin
   and Malabar
2. To trace the important historical developments with regard to the
   education from issue of the royal rescript in 1817
3. To analyze the progress with reference to fee concessions, grants and
   meals

**Educational initiatives during Pre-independence**
During British rule, Kerala consisted of three separate political entities
till 1947. Travancore and Cochin in the South were princely states,
while Malabar in the North was unified by the British into a single
administrative district and made a part of the Madras Presidency in 1800.
Travancore and Cochin remained princely states under strict British
guidance and control. After India became independent, as a part of the national policy to abolish princely states, Travancore and Cochin were integrated in 1949 into a single state. Later in 1956, consequent on the reorganization of states on linguistic basis, Malabar was added onto and a few Talukas at the South extreme of the region taken away from Travancore-Cochin to form the present state of Kerala. A historical review of the educational efforts of the government and the private agencies prior to independence and after, is attempted herewith to highlight the various policy changes and reforms that helped the educational expansion in Kerala and also to point out the major objectives of education. During the initial phase of educational expansion, education got its prominence for its intrinsic worthiness and played the role of enlightenment and empowerment. Government initiatives through the policy changes and educational reforms facilitated the process of educational expansion in Kerala. This also paved the way for social interventions in education and education became a social process.

**Early Educational Initiatives**

Early educational initiatives show the interrelationship between the political decisions and educational activities. At the beginning of the 19th century the number of educational institutions in the state were quite tow. Many of these institutions were facing problems. In 1817, the then Rani of Travancore received complaints of educational neglect from the villagers since they were finding it difficult to pay the schoolmasters. In response to this situation, a remarkable Royal rescript was issued in that year emphasizing the role of the state in meeting the educational expenditure for the eradication of educational backwardness. The beginning of modern education in Travancore was generally traced to this issue of the royal rescript in 1817 by Queen Gouri Parvathi Bayi under the advice of the Resident Colonel Munro. This rescript directed that "the state should defray the whole cost of education of its people, in order that there might be no backwardness in the spread of enlightenment among them. The issue of such a rescript asserting the role of the state in education and the initiative of the village people in
the form of a memorandum against the neglect of education can be identified as the early educational initiatives for modern educational development in Travancore which highlighted the enlightenment role of education. The educational initiative in the form of a rescript led to the establishment of five schools with two teachers in each school in areas in which local efforts were not forthcoming to provide educational facilities. Between 1817 and 1819 several orders were issued for starting schools in different parts of the state.

**Initiatives for English Education**

Government policy changes which had some indirect effects on the promotion of educational activities can be traced in the first Reform Bill of 1832. It paved the way for English medium education. Abolition of the East India Company's trading powers and the removal of appointment barriers of Indians in the company encouraged the English medium education. A few English medium schools were established in 1834. The government itself started an English medium school; the Raja's Free school at Trivandrum. Establishment of a number of government schools followed subsequently can be found in the various 'nittu' (orders) issued by the government. Further initiatives towards the betterment of education may be seen in the government orders sanctioning the appointment of scholars to compile text books in Malayalam.

Besides the direct involvement of the government in starting schools, government also encouraged private initiatives to start schools. This has resulted in the opening of missionary schools in various parts of the state. Missionaries devoted special attention to spread English education. Their educational efforts attracted mainly the backward classes and the depressed communities rather than the well-to-do and higher caste section of the Hindu population. Government also encouraged the missionaries in the establishment of schools by providing government grant to their educational institutions! Review of the early educational initiatives up to the first half of the 19th century indicates that although government has started some initiative through policy changes and direct action, it was limited in scope and extent. The expansion of
institutionalized education, both Malayalam and English is found in the second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Government intervention through educational reforms and programmes coincided with the educational activities of the missionaries, private agencies and other social reformers.

**Educational Efforts in the Second Half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century**

The second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century laid strong foundations in the enlightenment and empowerment role of education leading to the massive educational activities in Travancore. During this period the direct involvement of the government in the educational sector through educational reforms and policies was conspicuous than in early periods. Educational development in Kerala entered its modern phase during this period. The political, social and economic conditions were also favorable to such a change. The major policy reforms and programmes of the government for promoting educational activities during this period are reviewed to highlight the government initiatives in educational expansion.

**Governmental intervention in Education**

Travancore government entered significantly into the field of education during the administration of Dewan T. Madhava Rao (1862-1874). He gave shape to a fairly ambitious education policy. Government setting up a separate fund for the educational activities is noticed for the first time during his administration. Every year a sum of Rs. 20000 was appropriated towards the establishment of vernacular schools in every district on a sound basis. Madhava Rao also envisaged a comprehensive plan for educational development. Some of its major objectives were;

(1) Establishment of government schools including a central vernacular school at the capital  
(2) A school in each Taluk of the state  
(3) A normal school for the training of teachers  
(4) Encouraging private agencies to start schools through liberal grant-in-aid  
(5) Upgrading and integrating the indigenous schools into the formal system and  
(6) The establishment of a Text Book committee to translate and write
books of all kinds.

**Initiatives for Vernacular Education**

Another major thrust of the government policies was the expansion of vernacular education for which a Vernacular Education Department was organized with a separate Director and two Inspectors for two regions into which the state was divided. In 1866-67, government started 11 schools with 855 pupils. The number of government vernacular schools rose to 29 and the students to 2152 at the end of 1868-69.

**Grant-in-aid Scheme of 1869**

One of the major policy changes made by the government in 1869 to achieve the integration of the indigenous schools into the formal system was the introduction of the grant-in-aid scheme. This was an effective measure not only to attract the private initiatives into the educational sector but also to restructure the school education in a formal way. This scheme insisted that for the provision of grant-in-aid, the course of instruction pursued, the books used and the qualifications of teachers employed in indigenous schools should be the same as in government schools. Within two years of introducing the grant-in-aid scheme, the number of district schools rose to 49 of which 29 were departmental and 20 aided schools. The number of pupils under instruction rose to 2455 in two years.

**Proverty (village) School Scheme of 1871**

Another important educational effort initiated by Madhava Rao for the educational development was the introduction of 'proverty' (village) school scheme in 1871. According to this scheme, starting of one school in every proverty (village) was put into effect. Under it, people of the locality or village were to provide the school building upon which the government would give a grant of one 'fanam' per pupil for teaching facilities. The government also agreed to provide one master for each school on a salary of Rs. 7 per month and one inspector for every 14 schools to supervise their proper working with a salary of Rs.30 a month. This policy of state supported vernacular education was a novel venture which made educational investment a participatory one. Such a
policy encouraged the local initiative in providing schooling facilities. In 1872 itself about 141 schools were opened as a result of this policy. Within a period of 10 years from 1873 to 1883, government vernacular schools increased from 177 to 223 and private aided ones from 20 to 440.

**Book Committee in 1867**

Another major step by the government to standardize the school system was the formation of a book committee in 1867 with the charge of preparing original or translated text-books. This was to meet the growing demand for adequate text-books in the growing vernacular school system. 'Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran', a leading poet and well-known scholar, was the chairman of the committee for a considerable number of years and the leading force behind its activities. Establishment of the Sircar Book Depot in 1866 and the opening of branch depots in 1897 for the distribution of books issued by the Book Committee are some of the other government decisions to help the school education.

**Normal School**

A government initiative in providing teacher's training was the establishment of Normal School. It was developed into a Teacher's Training College by 1889. As early as 1868, it was reported that 36 out of the 57 "master and under-masters" in government vernacular schools had training in this institution,

**Local Effort in Vernacular Education**

A major educational policy change that has encouraged the local initiatives in the advancement of vernacular education can be identified from 1881. Instead of multiplying the government schools, preference was given to local effort in mobilizing resources for the spread of more schools. Hence the public not only contributed men and materials for the provision of schooling but also participated in such efforts without any caste/community differences. This has resulted in the spread of education at a faster rate and under this scheme the number of aided schools rose from 437 with 21574 pupils to 1375 with 57314 pupils.
within a period of 12 years from 1881.

**Education Rules and Grant-in-Aid Code of 1894**

Government initiatives in rectifying the defects of the existing educational system are found in the educational reforms and grant-in-aid code of 1894. Educational reforms in the form of new grant-in-aid code evolved the criteria for the aid as well as the amounts of grants to schools of various classes. The code provided for maintenance grants and special grants for buildings, furniture and public libraries for schools. Some of the other features of this scheme were (a) classification of schools (b) prescription of curricula of studies in English and vernacular for aided or recognized schools and (c) rules regarding organization and management of schools, qualification of teachers, buildings etc. In addition to these reforms, all English and vernacular schools for purposes of administration and inspection were placed under three inspectors each having a separate range. The dual control of education under the directors of vernacular and English education was also abolished and the whole system of education was brought under one single authority.

**Female Education**

Government intervention in the field of female education begins only from 1860s. It was a neglected area except for a few boarding schools run by the Missionaries during 1819-22. Missionary efforts made an impact on the attitude of the society towards female education. They tried to influence public opinion by exhorting people to send their girls to schools. Government initiative towards female education is found in the words of Dewan Madhava Rao. "Very little, if anything, has been done for female education. This subject calls for prompt attention as such education must be among other advantages the foundation of important social reforms". Government started its first school for girls at Karamana in Trivandrum in 1859. Vernacular schools separately for girls were organized in 1867. Separate schools for girls removed the reservation on the part of the parents to send their daughters to mixed schools. Some of the other policy reforms that have spread female education were found during the period 1894 to 1900. Government
abolished the fees for girls in all grades of schools leading to the popularity of girls' schools. The opening of a number of vernacular girls schools every year and the raising of the Girls High School at Trivandrum to a second grade college were the other steps in this direction.

**Education of the Low Castes**

Government initiatives in providing educational facilities to the backward and depressed castes began from 1865. The idea of educating these communities drew the attention of the then Dewan Madhava Rao when he recognized the fact that these low castes were educated by missionaries mainly for proselytization. So he mooted the idea of a school for Shanars and other low castes in southern Travancore. But it failed since the move was vetoed by the then Resident and Madras Government. Though it was repeatedly proclaimed that all classes, without distinction of caste or creed have access to public institutions, in reality government schools were not accessible to students from backward communities. It was in 1895, the government for the first time in the state took a determined effort by giving grants to schools for backward communities. In the grant-in-aid code of 1894-95, funds were provided for the first time for grants to schools for backward classes including special grants. The native Christian missionaries attracted by the liberal grant-in-aid opened large number of such special schools.

Further, government itself came forward to open schools intended exclusively for backward communities. In 1895-196 alone, it started 15 schools for them and in the next year opened 15 more schools. Government also recruited teachers from backward communities and imparted training to them. The encouragement given by the government was extended further in 1896-97 when it instituted 185 scholarships for pupils from such communities to appear for the Vernacular Elementary School Examination. Such pupils were given exemption from payment of examination fees also.

These steps were taken to meet the paucity of teachers in schools for backward communities since the forward communities were reluctant to
take up the assignment. Within a decade after the introduction of special schools for teaching of students belonging to the backward communities, the number of such schools increased to 480 and the enrolment in them to 43580 pupils including those enrolled in schools open to all communities. The concern for the educational upliftment of backward communities which began from the closing decades of the 19th century still continues to be one of the major distinguishing features of Kerala's educational policy.

**Socio-Economic Compulsions in Educational Expansion**

The latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century witnessed unprecedented growth of educational institutions in Kerala. Government interventions in the educational sector through its direct and indirect involvement helped the growth of literacy. The various policy reforms and programmes of the government not only formalized the school education, but also encouraged the private initiative in providing schooling facilities. Any analysis of such interventions both public and private, demands a brief review of the socio-economic factors that generated educational demand in Kerala. Educational policies followed in Travancore were greatly influenced by British Indian policies. The 1813 Charter Act and Munro's educational policies, Wood's Educational Dispatch of 1854 and T. Madhava Rao's educational reforms show the similarities and impacts of such policies on educational reforms in Kerala.

Policy changes leading to the reorganization of administration and education were accompanied by fundamental structural changes in socio-economic relations. Fundamental structural change right to sircar tenants facilitating the development of a land market. Farming, particularly of garden crops came to be organized on capitalist lines. European planters opened large areas of forest land for plantation of coffee and tea. The period also witnessed the starting of several trading and manufacturing companies by European coastal firms, in cotton and tiles and of agro-processing industries particularly of tea and coir. Local trade also developed as a consequence of such changes. In order to facilitate the movement of goods new public roads were constructed and
waterways cleaned, under a newly formed Department of Public works. Such changes in the structure, organization and functioning of the economy not only facilitated the supply of educational facilities, but also increased the demand for education. Another major component of the government policy for educational development was the linking of educational qualification with appointments to government jobs.

By 1891, it was claimed that educational qualifications based on University and Service Examinations "have been prescribed by government for almost all appointments in the state above the grade of peons. With the introduction of educational qualifications for selection to government jobs, there occurred a widespread demand for education and education became an instrument for job competition. This along with the commitment of the successive Dewans of Travancore to the spread of modern education resulted in the opening of many schools leading to the rise in literacy. The decline of the traditional landed classes of Namboodhiris and Nairs in positions of power and privileges due to changes in the institutional and political set up created an environment of equal rights for all the different social groups. Social reform movements started by the enlightened sections of the s in tenurial relations, agricultural practices, trade, industry etc, transformed the agrarian economy of Kerala.

The 'Pandaravaka Pattam Proclamation of 1865 conferred ownership forward and backward communities brought about radical changes in their respective communities facilitating the educational process. Christians and Ezhavas who were outside the pale of government service changed their strategies when individual merit and educational qualifications were made the criteria for selection to government service. This has led to the communal or social interventions in educational expansion. Similarly other communities including the lower castes organized themselves under various social banners demanding equal opportunities and facilities for education. Such communal pressures for educational expansion facilitated the government and social initiative in education leading to the opening of a large number of schools.
Educational Efforts in the First Half of the 20th Century
During the first half of the 20th century education played its instrumental role not only in enlightening and empowering the different sections of the people to fight for their civil and economic rights but also in contributing the social, economical and political well-being of the state. Acknowledging education as a public merit good, government as well as social organizations took keen interest in the establishment of schools. Favorable socio-economic factors also led to the increasing participation of various communities in education. The role of government during the period was mainly that of consolidation. Hence in this section we examine the major governmental interventions through policy changes and reforms in education that facilitated and consolidated the educational system.

One of the important policy reforms introduced during this period was the abolition of English schools at the lower primary stage and the introduction of Malayalam as the medium of instruction in primary school with classes I to IV. In 1904, government declared that free universal primary education would be the direct responsibility of the state. In the initial years due to the paucity of resources, this scheme was confined only to the backward communities and later in 1908 it was extended to all the communities.

Restrictions on admissions of pupils on the basis of caste were removed in 1911 and this has reduced the discrimination for admissions to educational institutions. Establishment of special schools for different castes and communities, opening of rural schools, night schools for adult education etc. were some of the government measures initiated during this period to promote literacy. Education Code 1910 Introduction of the Education Code in 1910 was a comprehensive measure in the classification, management, accommodation and equipment of schools. It defined the positions of each school in the system of public instruction and improved the efficiency of the managements and teachers.

It prescribed the qualifications of teachers and regulated school term fees, text-books and dealt with the rules regarding the recognition and
grant in-aid to schools. Govt. also appointed a Director of Public Instruction for the first time for the co-ordination of the educational activities in the state. Some of the important policy decisions that encouraged the education of backward and depressed community students were found in the form of fee concessions, lump-sum grants, mid-day meals, books, cloths etc. In 1907 a special exemption was given to Mohammedan pupils from paying fees in upper primary classes. In 1923 depressed community pupils were granted remission of full fees in both vernacular and English schools and backward community pupils half-fee concessions. An encouragement to female education was found in 1925 when full fee concession was granted to girl students belonging to communities enjoying half-fee concession. A scheme of providing mid-day meals was, introduced by the local people in various districts completely on a voluntary basis to needy children in primary classes as early as 1920.

Lump-sum grant was another incentive initiated in 1936 to depressed community students of class I II and IV. They were given lump-sum grants of 14 Chackrams (Rs.0.50) each. Free and Compulsory Education Educational Reforms committee of 1933 and the Education Reorganization Committee of 1945 investigated the educational problems of the state and suggested measures to rectify them. As per their recommendations, primary education was declared free and compulsory in the state in 1955. The service conditions and salary scales of private primary school teachers were brought on a par with those of departmental school teachers. On the whole, educational reforms and policies initiated by the government during the first half of the 20th century formalized and consolidated the educational system. Such steps resulted in raising the total enrolment in schools to 11 lakhs in 1947.

CONCLUSION
Education plays an indispensable and indisputable role in the development of a nation. There is a direct and definite positive correlation between education and development. A country with a vast chunk of the population remains as illiterates cannot flourish in any of its domain of development. Realizing the paramount significance of
education, the Government made sincere and honest attempts to promote education in rural as well as in urban areas. Educational policies followed in Travancore were greatly influenced by British Indian policies. The 1813 Charter Act and Munro's educational policies, Wood's Educational Dispatch of 1854 and T. Madhava Rao's educational reforms show the similarities and impacts of such policies on educational reforms in Kerala.

REFERENCE