

A New Dimension in Higher Education in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract— Education has continued to evolve diversity and extents its reach and coverage since the dawn history. Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. Education is also an investment in the present and to the future. This cardinal principle has always influenced the National Policy on education in India to promote the condition of success. Therefore the State Government laid minimum level of learning for each stage of education.

Keywords— *Higher Education, U.G.C., Universities*

1. Introduction

The National policy of Education of 1968 also marked a significant step in the history of higher education in post-independent India. It aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration. It laid stress on the need for a radical Reconstruction of the education system, improving its quality at all stages, especially in Higher Education and gave much greater attention to science and technology, to the cultivation of moral values, a closer relation between education and the life of the people.

2. National Policy on Higher Education 1968

Since the adoption of the 1968 Educational Policy there had been considerable expansion in expansion in educational facilities all over the country at all levels, particularly in Higher Education. By this policy, the most notable development had been the acceptance of a common structure of education by most of the States and the introduction of the 10+2+3 system by most of the State including Tamil Nadu. A beginning was also made in the restructuring of the courses at the under-graduate level. Centres of Advanced Studies were set up for post-graduate education and research [1]. In higher education, in general, and technical education, in particular, steps were taken to facilitate inter-regional mobility by providing equal access to all Indians of requisite merit, regardless of their origin. The universal character of Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education were underscored. In the areas of research and development, and education in science and technology, special measures were taken to establish network arrangement between different

institutions in the country. It was done to pool their resources and participate in projects of national importance [2]. Further, in view of mixed experiences with system of affiliation; Autonomous Colleges appear in large numbers replacing affiliating system. It paved way for a freer and more creative association of universities and colleges. Similarly, a creation of Autonomous Departments within Universities on a selective basis was encouraged. This Autonomy was freedom accompanied accountability. Courses and programmes were redesign to meet the demand of specialisation. Letter State Level planning and coordination of higher education took place through councils of Higher Education. The U.G.C and this councils co-ordinate to keep a watch on standards [3].

Research in the Universities was encouraged with enhanced support. Steps were also taken to ensure its high quality. Suitable mechanism was adopted by the U.G.C for coordination Research in Universities. Efforts were made for the setting up off National Research facilities within the University system, with proper forms of Autonomous Management. Research in Ideology, Humanities and Social Sciences received adequate support. To fulfil the need for synthesis of knowledge interdisciplinary researches were also encouraged [4]. Thus the 1968 education Policy paved way for the Higher Education Institutions to become autonomous leading to academic independence and developing research in Universities.

3. The new Education Policy of 1986

The New Educational Policy of 1986(revised in 1992) sought to remedy the omissions of the earlier one. The salient features of this policy are summarised below. Education is essentially meant for all irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex. Progress of education becomes fundamental for all round development. The common educational system in the form of 10+2+3 structure was made to be continued in all States. Education was expected to motivate the younger generation for international co-operation and peaceful co-existence. As stipulated in the previous policy framework minimum level of learning for each stage of education was stressed. The New Education Policy also laid special emphasis on removal of disparities and equality of opportunity with special reference to women, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes, and other educationally backward sections, minorities and handicapped persons. It aimed the introduction of systematic and well planned vocational education. Higher

Education was made dynamic, through autonomy coupled with accountability, restructuring of curriculum, transformation of teaching methods, strengthening of research facilities, encouragement of open and distance education, delinking of degrees for jobs etc. It sought to strengthen technical and management education with references to the demands of the changing economy. While the role and responsibility of the state remained essentially unchanged, the central government accepted larger responsibilities to reinforce the national and integrative character of education, to maintain quality and standards. It was planned to maintain effective co-ordination among various National Institutions such as U.G.C, AICTE, ICAR, IMC, NCERT, NIEPA, and NCTE so as to achieve integrated planning. Functional linkages at national level Non-Governmental Organizations, Voluntary Agencies and Aided Institutions were encouraged, subject to proper management in financial assistance. It envisaged the establishment of Indian Education would be gradually increased to reach a level of 6 percent of National income as early as possible [5]. The New Educational Policy aimed at scientific and technology education and establishment of Autonomous Institutions and Departments. It also encouraged Non-Governmental Organizations and Voluntary Agencies to establish and run Higher Educational Institutions and thereby reduce the financial burden of the Government. The Education Policy of the Government of Tamil Nadu was generally the adoption, absorption and extension of the national policy outlined above. But there was certain significant difference in the policy of Government of Tamil Nadu especially with regard to the medium of instruction and position of English at National level. The Education Department, Government of Tamil Nadu is evolved taking into consideration the educational infrastructure and the demands of social equality prevailing in the state [7].

4. Higher Education Policy of Tamil Nadu from 1967

The three Universities in Tamil Nadu that existed at Madras, Chidambaram and Madurai fostered University education in the State till 1967. According to the University Education Policy of Tamil Nadu, the jurisdiction of the Madras University was spread over eleven Districts viz Madras, Chengalpet, South Arcot, North Arcot, Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur, Salem, Dharmapuri, Pudukkottai, Coimbatore and Nilgiris in 1967. The Government and Aided Colleges in these regions were affiliated to it. In addition to these, many Departments offering, Post-Graduate and Research Courses, were also affiliated to the University [6]. The government of TamilNadu realised the problem of College students in the South Districts in contacting Madras University. So it had instructed the University of Madras to open extension Centres were

opened in Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli in 1972 [8]. It enabled the students of these areas to contact the regional offices to clear and solve their enquiries and problems without much strain. Introduction of New Courses in the University of Madras, Government of Tamil Nadu, had encouraged during its Post-Centenary Silver jubilee Celebration in September 1983 to start new departments viz. Department of Islamic studies, Department of Jainology, Department of Saiva Siddhanta, Department of Vaishnavism, Department of Gandhian Studies etc [9]. These new departments had fully engaged in the research programme and brought out many research projects. Thus micro type of study had developed in the University. The Government had also asked the University to extent Autonomy to many colleges. The University of Madras was fully satisfied on the functioning of Autonomy in Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College, Madras, Loyola College, Madras and Madras Christian College Tambaram and the University extended their autonomy for another five years [10].

5. The Annamalai University

Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar felt the dire need of higher learning in Tamil Nadu. It made him to establish Meenakshi College at Chidambaram on 24 June 1920. Later it blossomed as the Annamalai University in July 1929. It is a unitary and Residential University. It has no affiliated colleges. It was conducting P.U.C, U.G., P.G. and Research Courses and awarding degrees [11]. After a few decades the student's strength had increased in the University. It led to student's unrest and students clashes. It disturbed the peace and conducive atmosphere in the campus. The government of Tamil Nadu decide to shed the P.U.C courses from the Annamalai Universities Campus. Accordingly in august 1972 the Pre-University Course was separated from this University. This University also introduced the semester system and Tamil as alternative Medium in 1974-75 on the basis of the policy of the government of Tamilnadu [12]. It also introduced the semester system with continuous internal assessment for all Post graduate courses with effect from 1985-86. The curriculum was updated so as to bring in the necessary measure of relevance and application. Further the University had introduced the B.D.S course since 1984-1985 and the M.B.B.S., a medical course, in the year 1985-86 [13]. This University had introduced new courses taking into consideration the emerging need for job-oriented courses. It helped the students in the neighbouring areas to study job oriented courses. This University also introduced Distance Education for students who could not pursue their higher studies in regular colleges. Further it also offered Open University System and U.G. and P.G. Degree courses through that system for those who could not get education through the formal system.

6. New Courses in Madurai - Kamaraj University

The Madurai- Kamaraj University, which was established in 1966, was a teaching and affiliating type of University. Its jurisdiction extended over four districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari [14]. This University started new Departments like Library Science, Political Science, Sociology and Education. They were opened with Government Grants and many Departments were upgraded as research Departments in 1975-76. The number of affiliated colleges to this University increased from 96 to 105 from 1966 to 1976. On the guidance of the Government of Tamil Nadu, this University introduced in 1976 the semester system both in the University Departments and in the affiliated colleges [15]. Early in 1972 the Government also gave liberal grants for establishing Advanced Study Centres for Commerce at Karaikudi, Botany and Chemistry at Tuticorin, Indian Culture at Palam and Economics at Nagercoil [16]. This University also granted affiliation to unaided colleges liberally from 1984 onwards in consonance with the government's policy of permitting self-financing colleges in the states. The Madurai Kamaraj University became a strong education centre in the south due to the new policy decisions of the government of Tamil Nadu. Its growth helped the pupils of this area to get good standard education.

7. Emergence of New Universities

The Government of Tamil Nadu had enacted the Bharathiar and Barathidasan University Acts in 1981. The Government had established Bharathiar University at Coimbatore and Bharathidasan Universities at Trichirappalli by Act No.23 of 1982. These measures were taken to fulfil the long cherished need of the people of these regions. They were also set up as affiliating type of Universities. The Colleges situated in Periyar, Coimbatore, Nilgiris districts were affiliated to the Bharathiar University and those in Thanjavur, Thichirappalli and Pudukottai ditricts were affiliated to the Bharathidasan Univerity started to function with 9 and 6 departments repectively [17]. These Universities were christened in memory of the poets Subramaniya Bharathiyar and Kanaga subburathinam alias Bharathidasan. As these 20th century Tamil Poet's ideas were revolutionary, the new Universities were started with new non-conventional and professional courses including Computer Application. Government of Tamil Nadu had brought an Act in 1981 to set up a Tamil University. This University to cherish the memory of 5th world Tamil conference held at Madurai was established at Tanjavore and it was inaugurated on 15th September 1981 [18]. This University was set up to propagate the splendour, glory and magnificence of Tamil among the word populace

and to bring within the fold of Tamil Language the whole of the overgrowing scientific knowledge in the entire world to establish close liaison with people. It is a unitary type of institution. It is also centre for conducting research and award D.Lit. / D.Sc. degrees for those who are already in possession of a Doctorate Degree [19].

8. Expansion of collegiate education

Education in Madras State was completely free upto S.S.L.C stage (XI STD) in 1968. Free education was not extended beyond the stage. As a result many intelligent pupils had to deny themselves college education due to financial difficulties. Tamil Nadu government took this into account in 1967-68 and ordered that (a) no fees should be levied for Pre-University Course (PUC) from students whose Parent's or guardian's annual income did not exceed Rs.1500p.a (b) No fees should be levied from any students belonging to S.C., S.T., M.B.C., and other B.C., if the annual income of the parent's or guardian's did not exceed Rs.2000 [20]. It became popular among the people and press. In the next year the government had abolished the tuition fees for Pre-University courses and thus made education for all the students [21].

9. Introduction of Tamil Medium in Higher Education

Several eminent leaders of our country, including Mahatma Gandhi had urged that regional languages should be made as the medium of instruction so a to enable the students to understand the subject much better and to ensure that they do not function in isolation from the community. As a first step the Government of Tamil Nadu had isolation from the community. As a first step the government of Tamil Nadu had introduced Tamil as medium of Instruction in Pre-University courses. As Is was welcomed and supported by the pupil, the DMK. Government had introduced B.A .Course in Tamil Medium from 1968 [22]. In order to encourage the students who studied science subjects in Tamil P.U.C., Tamil medium B.Sc. degree courses in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botant and zoology were introduce during 1969-1970. In 1971-1972 about 20638, 4025and 2282 students had studied with Tamil as Medium of Instruction in P.U.C., B.A., and B.Sc., classes' respectively [23]. However the book publishers did not come forward to publish college text books in Tamil which incurred loss for them. Some Publishers published Tamil Medium books at high rate and there was fluctuation in the prices of the textbooks. The prices were too high for middle class and lower middle class students. In order to tide over this problem, the Tamil Nadu government had taken a policy decision to set up a Text book society. It was established on 4th March 1970. Since then the society had produced standard books in Tamil Medium at a fair and Uniform [24].

10. Autonomous colleges

The Kothari Education Commission had suggested the system of Autonomous colleges. It became the New Higher Education Policy of the Government of Tamil Nadu Since 1978. According to it certain old institutions were granted autonomy in the development of courses of study and method of teaching and learning from P.U.C to post graduate levels. The University of Madras, with the cooperation of U.G.C had granted autonomy to four colleges namely Loyola College, Madras, Madras Christian College, Tambaram, P.S.G college of Technology, Coimbatore and Vivekananda College, Madras. Vivekananda College was only partial autonomy in respect of the two post-graduate departments, i.e. Chemistry and Economics in 1978 [25].

11. Semesterisation

The government of Tamil Nadu announced a new policy in 1975. It wanted to change the curriculum and introduction teaching reforms for the undergraduate education and to restructure the education system. The University of Madras had accepted it. The restructured education system was approved by the University of Madras Senate in 1975 and early in 1976 and it came into operation. Other Universities like Madurai-Kamaraj and Annamalai Universities had also introduced this restructured system. By it the undergraduate curriculum was revised and semesterised. It was put into operation in 15 colleges of 115 Arts and Science Colleges in the first phase and in later it was extended to other colleges [26].

12. Encouragement of Professional Education

The Government decided to encourage professional education which would be helpful for the students to get employment. Therefore it approved and affiliated a new private professional college Sri Sarada College of Physical Education for women at Salem in 1982. Extending higher education to the rural and backward areas influenced the policy of the State government.

13. Policy of Consolidation

There was financial constraint to the government of Tamil Nadu in the 1980's. There fore it had taken a policy decision in 1984 not to start any new government and aided colleges. But it was decided then to consolidate and develop the existing institutions by improving infrastructures and introducing additional post-graduate and under graduate courses in the existing colleges by this in 1984-85, provision for building, laboratory equipments, furniture's and other amenities for students, play round and

recreational facilities in Government colleges were taken up for implementation [27].

14. Policy on Self –Financing colleges

As the Government of Tamil Nadu could not open new colleges due to financial crunch, the problem to accommodate the rush for admission in colleges had to be met with new policy decisions. Therefore the government had decided in 1985 to give affiliation and approval to new Science and arts Colleges on unaided basis. By this two Self financing Science and Arts colleges were started.²⁸ Further to cope up with the rush for admission and to help the backward and poor students 6 more degree Courses and 2 more P.G courses in government colleges and 30 Degree courses and 31 P.G Courses in Aided Colleges ere started during 1985-1986 [28].

15. Conclusion

Thus vertical expansion of higher educational institutions had taken in rural places of Tamil Nadu since 1967. This enabled the middle class and lower middle class people to get the higher education. The scholarship and incentive schemes had brought all the section of the people under the shelter of higher education. Syllabus and curriculum was designed to suit the need of rural pupil and helped them in getting their degrees. Further it enabled them to get employment.

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