



## **Education in South India: An analysis**

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### **Abstract**

The main objective of this paper is to critically analyze the growth of education among the various castes during colonial period in Andhra. With the intervention of colonial rule witnessed greater progress in the growth of education among the lower castes. In the second half of the 19th century government revised educational code and adopted a new scheme of payments which influenced the growth of education among the non-Brahman castes. The series of Acts were as catalysts for a wider change in the middle classes as well as the depressed castes in the society. The new forces created by the British rule and western education weakened the traditional social order and broke down the intellectuals monopoly of the Brahmins. Not only did it break the traditional order of the society and Brahmin's domination, in the post-formation of Andhra Pradesh the non-Brahmin castes also got the political power in the state and continued the same kind of domination as the Brahmins played during colonial period. But the lower caste situation was the same. By analyzing colonial education and its importance in the wider socio-historical context this paper would address responses of the various castes towards colonial education in Andhra.

**Keywords:** Christian missionaries, colonial education, brahmin, depressed classes.

### **Introduction**

It is necessary to put the study of the 'Colonia Education' in a historical perspective with reference to the evolution of educational system as an instrument of moral and material improvement under the colonial rule. The tracing out of educational development should therefore be done with constant reference to colonial society. Various policy formulations and differential political and social developments have had their impact on the growth of education under colonial rule in India. Development of education is not a static event; it is rather a continuous process, and hence its history is bound to have effect on its present as well as future. It therefore becomes indispensable to observe the historical milieu of educational development to identify with the present and envision

the future. The present study constructs educational history of Andhra and mainly focuses how different castes were transformed and responded towards colonial education in Andhra.<sup>1</sup>

By way of establishing that philosophy, language and pupil and teacher relationship are linked to the hegemony in society, Antonio Gramsci (1971) wrote that "Every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship and occurs not only within a nation, between the various forces of which the nation is composed, but in the international and worldwide field, between complexes of national and continental civilizations". By seen in this perspective the education could be considered the most important 'ideological state apparatus' devised by



colonial rulers. Education, was not just a pedagogical system but the whole relationship between the colonized and colonizer. To rule a new civilization, the colonial rulers had to create a new order of society that to be acted upon and coercion had to be replaced or supplemented by the spread of colonial education. It was a logical necessity of the colonizer that produced the newly educated middle class. For it enabled the colonial state to consolidate their position in the newly colonized region. In other words the colonial educational system had created a section of collaborator or a mediator between the colonial state and the large mass of population whom they governed. According to Gramsci, intellectuals are the product of the education system and 'are officers of the ruling class for the implementation of subsidiary function of social dominion and political government. In the same way Yechuri has remarked the process of education under the class society, therefore, embraces the process of generating and nurturing a consciousness in the interest of ruling class.<sup>2</sup> Marx and Engel (1976) in their 'German Ideology' observed that the ruling class, with the intellectual force, always tries to control the means of production'. Evidently thinkers of this persuasion hold that education is an ideological instrument forged by the colonial rulers to serve and preserve their own interest and then largely to maintain same approaches along with economic and political dominance of imperialism intended to consolidate its consequence through the medium of educational personal.<sup>3</sup>

The character of colonial state was dual role, one was destructive, i.e to meet the needs of colonial state and other was the regenerative, i.e to change India into a capitalist state. The imperialist historians used the western ideology of education to inculcate the minds of the Indians national intelligentsia to strengthen the colonial conquest. Some of the non-Marxist scholars like Hubson and Furnival criticised the destructive character of colonial state that the capitalists had been exploiting the underdeveloped world and disseminating colonial ideology, as a tool to keep the colonized in subjection. The Western education aimed at a deliberate attempt to sow the seeds of new norms and values which merely remained as an illusion. The Western education aimed at a deliberate attempt to sow the seeds of new norms and values which merely remained as an illusion. In this process of dissemination of colonial ideology, the colonized began to believe that the colonial state would change India into a capitalist state. However, the colonial character was so destructive that national intelligentsia used the indigenous educational system as a driving force to legitimise their tradition while attacking the colonial system.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Brief History of Education in Andhra**

The history of education in colonial Andhra has two chronological phases. The first phase covers from 1813 to 1858 under East India Company and the second phase from 1860-1920 under the direct rule of the British.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Growth of Education in Andhra: (1813-1860)**

The East India Company encouraged and followed the ancient method of



educational systems. The company's early attempts to recognize education system left education in the hands of missionaries and philanthropists, before the 1813. The question of imparting learning to the local population initiated a beginning in the colonial ideological intervention for 'native moral upliftment'. The company's Charter Act of 1813 had incorporated educational clauses which allowed Christian Missionaries involvement in the educational activities and incurred an expenditure of one lack rupees on this account'. This was the beginning of western education in India under the company's rule. Thereafter, Sir Thomas Munro (1820-27), made a minute for improving the education in the Madras Presidency. This minute made enquiries into the state of indigenous education and extent of education among natives in the Madras Presidency. The collector provided information on the indigenous educational system and method of learning. The spread of education in Andhra was very local because vernacular education was very much limited in Telugu district.<sup>6</sup> So that Thomas Munro had set up a committee on public instructions and started 14 district and Tahsil schools (primary schools) with government grants. The primary schools were started at Rajamundry, Kakinada and Narsapuram. These efforts were primarily aimed at extending elementary education that was already in existence and improve its quality so that these would result in diffusion of useful knowledge. The efforts were made to impart education in vernacular but the institutions were carried in the western style. But this emphasis on spreading popular education was interrupted by a change of policy on the part of the government of India, i.e

the interventions and attempts that followed Lord Macaulay's Minute, which brought teaching in English medium in all schools. This shift to English medium had negative consequences on the Telugu vernacular schools throughout the Andhra region. It also resulted in the closing up of some of the indigenous schools because of some of the withdrawal of financial aid from the government. In 1836, the Board of Public Instructions was supposed by a new Board called the Committee for Native Education, which was to direct and organize normal schools and to establish schools. At a different level, the Christian missionaries made an effort to open schools in Northern Circar districts. For instance, the Godavari Delta Mission (1836) at Narsapuram, Palkollu etc., basically worked at places like Amalapuram, Bendamurlanka in Godavari district. During this period, the then the Madras Governor, Elphinstone issued a Minute (1839) for encouragement of higher education among upper classes. This resulted in the opening of higher education and in 1841 Rober Noble had opened the Noble College at Masulipatnam. In 1853, all high schools have been converted into collegiate departments: there were five such provincial schools, two at Rajamundry and Bellary and the remaining three in the rest of Andhra region.<sup>7</sup>

#### Growth of Private Educational Institutions

In the first half of the 19th century, private educational institutions went hand in hand with government efforts in starting educational institutions. The Raja of Pitapuram and Zamindar of Vizayanagaram contributed for the growth of education in the Telugu districts. The former patronized schools



at Kakinada and Rajahmundry, whereas that latter patronized schools at Vizagapatnam, Vizayanagaram and Madras during the 1850's. These institutions were not only instrumental in spreading education but also encouraged social reforms and helped in creating a new consciousness in Andhra. The Raja of Bobbili, Venkatagiri and Parlakimidi also established schools at Bobbili (Ganjam District, Nellore and Parlakimidi respectively, during this period. These private efforts were matched by government initiative in establishing schools systematically and impart vernacular education to the masses. The constant changes in both the policy and personnel whose duty it was to make progress of education under the company rule by the Downward Filtration Theory came in the way of full development of education in Andhra.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Growth of Education in Andhra: (1860-1920)**

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed comparatively greater progress in the growth of education with the establishment of Anglo-vernacular schools in many parts of Andhra. In Kakinada in 1852 with the combined efforts of the Collector Prendergast and his Shistadar, Tulasinga Chattiya, an Anglo-vernacular school was established which was maintained on public subscription. Thereafter, one of the important schools model, i.e Rate schools were commenced in Godavari District in 1852, by G.N Taylor, who sketched the new persuasion to spread the education among the Godavari people. All these schools were supported by local subscription and their successful functions attracted the attention of the inhabitants of the neighboring villages dominated by rich farming community.<sup>9</sup> There upon, G.N Taylor submitted to the

Government in 1854 that the Godavari District farmers were seeking the establishment of similar schools. The people came forward with contributions towards the expenses of the schools. Taylor's attempts in establishing well organized and systematically run schools had born fruit, for these schools created a dire for the study of western learning among the Telugu people. The schools under this new system continued up to 1863 and therefore the Rate Schools were a noteworthy feature in the history of education in Andhra. The Woods Dispatch of 1854 had its influence also on the growth of modern education in Andhra. With the growth of new private schools encouraged by government grant-in aid system there was some improvement in the spread of higher and middle school education. Under the influence of Woods Dispatch, a separate education department has been established under the control of the Director of Public Instruction in 1855. Though for the spread of mass education the medium of instruction in higher education should have been in vernacular, the popular demand everywhere being for English education the vernacular education had suffered. There was also confusion as a result of frequent changes in the educational system under different dispatches, with the types of grants -in aid for educational institutions and with the failure of local boards in taking lead resulting in inadequate educational progress in Madras Presidency. It is to overcome this problem need to develop education; the Madras Presidency government promulgated the Madras Act VI of 1863. The object of this Act was to provide proper machinery for the collection and management of rate schools by which certain village schools



in the subdivision of the Godavari District were supported. The passing of the Madras Act of 1871 is another important landmark in the spread of education. This Act proposed imposition of compulsory Cess (i.e local funds) for the promotion of education in towns and country. While the improvement of Elementary Education, Act III of 1871 was applied to the towns, the Madras Government Act IV was provided for the rural areas. The municipal funds were sought to be used for the support of education. All the above Acts had manifold impact on the growth of education in Andhra. The Madras Government in fact, transferred the institutions of education department, at primary and secondary level to the control of local fund board. Under this scheme, the Godavari Rate Schools were transferred or brought under the control of local boards. Apart from these activities, in terms of private intuitive the missionaries and non-missionaries made admirable efforts in promoting secondary schools education. The progress of education in Andhra up to the commencement of Hunter Commission in 1882 was comparatively good in Andhra Districts. But there was an imbalance in the growth between higher and elementary education. The history of education in Andhra under the impact of 1882 Hunter Commission recommendations took a positive turn. The Hunter Commission recommended the withdrawal of government from the management of higher education and encouraged the private efforts through grant-in-aid.<sup>10</sup> It also emphasized on the need to improve primary education; it was essentially irreconcilable with any large scheme to deepen and strengthen the intellectual vitality of the college. The failure of educational system to

reach the lower classes or deprived sections was one of the issues that haunted the early colonial education. H.H Grigg, the Director of Public Instruction, stated that by 1880 the educational system had failed to reach the lower sections in the society. This issue naturally attracted the attention of the Hunter Commission, which recommended that if there was sufficient strength, special schools or classes could be started with liberal grants-in-aid to encourage them. Another problem has been the vernacular primary schools. During this period all the vernacular primary schools in various districts catering to the needs of the rural people more than the English institutions, had slowly, adopted the government run school system of English education. It appears that the progress of secondary education in various districts in Andhra was satisfactory. The Hunter Commission in 1883, recommended the transfer of some secondary schools for boys to municipal boards. Some instances of this are the transfer of high schools in Chicacole, Cuddapah, Madanapalli, Guntur, Kurnool, Adoni and Bellari. All of these schools were maintained efficiently, for the people took upon themselves the responsibility of promoting secondary education in Andhra. With the increasing local management the government had withdrawn from the management in favour of non-government agencies. The government however was not in favour of complete withdrawal as this could affect the well managed government schools, i.e Mandal Schools. For instance, from 1899 to 1900 the Northern Circars the government board had 1,3,14 and 5 schools including aided and unaided agencies and Ceded districts had 0, 5, 4, and 0 schools respectively in Andhra.<sup>11</sup>



Between 1882 (Hunter Commission) and 1900, the number of high schools were doubled while the strength rose by fourfold. During this period, compared to high schools the number of middle schools had gone up only marginally but the strength was more than double. Despite all these efforts at the end of the 19Th century, in Andhra there were only 10 colleges; two each at Bellary and Nellore but all of them put together had only 308 pupils. While there were 6 colleges in 1882, by 1900 they rose to 10 colleges. The growth of the professional education however was very backward, except for the only agricultural college opened in Godavari district, in 1886. One important contribution of the college education was the expose of Indian educated class to the western thought, which brought about a new awakening among this educated classes. The formation of nationalist in intelligentsia had emerged out of this English medium college education who in turn initiated far reaching reform in society. The higher education however, remained elite in character, for the higher educational facilities were utilized more by the traditional learning communities. The educational progress at all India level during the early two decades of the 20th century, was slow but steady, for the increase in absolute terms had doubled. The total number of pupil under the instruction in 1896-1897, was over four million and by 1920 this number had more than doubled. During this period in the Madras Presidency, growth of the education among the different religions and castes was slower compared to the Bengal Presidency.<sup>12</sup> According to Aparna Basu, among the Telugu speaking people there was variation in region wise, i.e among the East Coast

Division, Agency, and Deccan regions, the Godavari-Krishna Delta showed good progress compared to other regions in the growth of education. The appointment of the Indian University Commission (1902) on the basis of whose recommendation the Indian University Act was passed in 1904, initiated a new era in the history of higher education in India. The next major change was the declaration of the educational policy through a Government resolution, in 1913. At the same time, reforms were initiated in elementary education system by people like G.K Gokhale, a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. All these changes had a great impact on nature of the growth of education during the first two decades of the 20 Th century. Though the government was in favour of compulsory and free education initially later it rejected the plea on the grounds that the scheme was also suspicious that the reforms may eventually contribute to the overthrow of the British Raj.<sup>13</sup> But Goghale's efforts did not go in vain. His efforts had born fruit in terms of a separate Education Department and a movement in favour of mass education. Moreover, serious steps were initiated to improve quality in secondary education. This type of efforts could be seen in private, aided and missionary educational institutes. Thus, under the colonial rule the structure of education and its administration during 1860 and 1921 witnessed a marked change at all levels, i.e elementary, middle and high schools and college levels. It was the growth of education that had contributed to social change and formation of all India community of English educated intelligentsia. The Taylor Rate Schools that were grown in number contributed to the growth of elementary education in the Godavari delta region. Among the



Andhra districts the growth of education in the Madras Presidency. This growth, more or less was made possible because of the economic development brought by economical agriculture. Thus, educational growth also contributed to the growth of national ideas. Andhra people even fought for a separation province for Telugu region and a University. From the days of Vandemataram Movement, the national education gradually transformed the nature of private education in this region.

#### **District Wise Growth of Education**

Under the colonial rule, the Telugu speaking districts consisted of the three Divisions, i.e., East Coast, Agency districts and Deccan Divisions, under the Madras Presidency. The development of education among these three Divisions was uneven with the Northern Circars showing faster development both in terms of establishment educational schools and the strength of the pupils when compared to the Ceded districts. This was due to the early influence of the British on the region and the wide spread educational activities of the missionaries. The economic underdevelopment of Ceded districts also had an impact on the educational development of this region.<sup>14</sup> Thomas Munro, who conducted the district wise enquiry on educational progress, nature of education, and number of schools, because instrumental in establishing two principal schools in each district and one inferior school in each taluk. From the second half of the 19th century, several Taylor Rate schools were set up in the Godavari district and this gave impetus to the extension and improvement of education in the coastal Andhra region. Significantly, this was the region, which was comparatively richer with impressive

urban growth compared to other regions. After 1871, the system of 'local fund' gave support to the new school schemes in the rural districts, because all the schools were now maintained by the Municipalities, Act of IV of 1871. The following table shows the number and proportion of instruction persons also able to read and write in several districts by the 1871 census.<sup>15</sup>

#### **Conclusion**

What is remarkable during the study of the growth of education in Andhra during this period was that the improvement of education among non-Brahmin castes and depressed classes. The Brahmins being top in the social ladder were the first to reap the benefits of colonial education and continued their domination after the introduction of English education. However colonial education brought other non-Brahmin upper castes into the orbit of colonial bureaucracy. The spread of education among the peasant castes like Kamma and Reddis, Kapus etc had a positive impact on society and politics. These castes with their education became a strong force in the socio-political awakening that showed in the Non-Brahman Movement in south India which was against Brahminical domination in the colonial bureaucracy

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