

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION BASED ON SOURCE OF FUNDING AND EXPENDITURE INCURRED IN THE UNITED PROVINCES IN MODERN INDIA

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Abstract

The advent of modern education in India, based on a secular system of grants-in-aid, is attributable largely to the policies introduced by the Government in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While the present educational system has evolved over the years, and tuned itself to the present needs, both global and national, it still retains various foundational aspects of modern education, one being the grants-in-aid system.

This paper attempts to analyze the gradual development of school education, from the lens of the expenditure incurred in this exercise, which was crucial for its implementation. The various sources and modes of funding have been elaborated, and juxtaposed with the actual progress displayed by the aided schools, to understand the efficacy as well as the drawbacks of the system.

Keywords: *Grants-in-aid, Provincial revenue, municipal funds, primary schools, secondary education*

Introduction

The government funding of educational institutions began with the promulgation of the grants-in-aid, which became the basis of the modern educational system of the country. Gradually, the vast structure of modern education developed on government funding and is still extant to the day. The funds were sourced from public revenue as well as private sources. The primary school fund, broadly speaking, depended on two supply sources- provincial grants and local rates.¹ (Croft, Review of Education in India 1886, 1888, p.17). The provincial grants were either assigned as special grants for specific purposes or else credited in the lump to local rates.² (Education Department, File No. 31, 1888, p.163). In the instance of not being spent wholly in the former case, the balance lapsed again to the provincial fund from which it had originated, becoming unavailable for primary education unless re-allotted. Hence, in this case, the real provincial grant was the actual amount allotted and spent, and in that sense, expenditure was synonymous with income.³ (Education Department, File No. 31, p.163). On the other hand, if the provincial grant got credited to local rates, it lapsed to provincial services in the same manner as a special un-spent grant would lapse. (Education Department, File No. 31, p.163). To understand the connection between income and expenditure, it is imperative to explain the channelization of funds from its source to the utilization point's viz., early school education in this case.

Contribution from Local and Municipal funds and expenditure incurred

During 1870-71, any part of the financial burden of educating the masses was borne by local and municipal funds in the North-western provinces. (Education Department, File No. 31, p.168). It is evident from the figures given below that how more than half of the public expenditure on education was channelized towards the education of the masses.

Statement of percentage of expenditure on primary schools:

Province- North Western Provinces & Awadh	Percentage of public educational funds devoted to Departmental and Aided primary schools	Percentage of Provincial Educational Funds devoted to Departmental and Aided primary schools	Percentage of total expenditure devoted to Departmental and Aided primary schools	Percentage of total educational expenditure devoted to primary schools of all classes (Departmental, Aided & Inspected)
	50.74	23.28	45.70	46.21

At the same time, it is also clear that the Provincial assignment for education was allotted to primary education in the province. (Education Department, File No. 31, pp.170-171).

The contribution from local and municipal funds for the support of secondary schools in the North western provinces was of a lesser order amounting to 8 per cent. In the whole country, the cost of educating a pupil in an aided high school was 72 per cent of the cost of his education

in a government high school; the North western provinces, Punjab and Bengal being below average. (Education Department, File No. 31, pp.205-206).

The proportion borne by provincial revenues to the total expenditure in secondary schools amounted to 69 per cent in the North western provinces. (Education Department, File No. 31, p.205). In the North western provinces and Awadh, between 1882 and 1885, the public expenditure was reduced to the extent of 32 per cent, while at the same time the expenditure from local sources increased by 93 per cent. (Croft, Review of Education in India 1886, p.13). The increase of Rs. 3,56,000 in the government expenditure for non-tuition purposes was accounted in the large increase of Rs. 3,35,000 in the cost of construction of buildings. The cost of construction or allotment of funds, increased from Rs. 3,60,000 in 1881-82 to Rs. 6,95,000 in 1884-85. The increase was phenomenal in the North western provinces and Awadh amounting to Rs. 1,66,000 distributed to schools under private and public management respectively in the proportion of 2 to 1. (Croft, p.15).

Contribution from Provincial grants and incurred expenditure

Of the actual expenditure, in 1885-86, some share of the cost debited to district and municipal funds was derived either directly or indirectly from provincial grants instead of local rates. The receipts from this source were highest in the province. The contributions made from provincial revenues to district funds to meet the cost of “transferred services”⁴ (Croft, p.102) in the year 1884-85 amounted to the order of around 7^{1/2} lakhs. There was little variation in the expenditure from this source in the successive year i.e., 1885-86. (Croft, p.102) From the same report, we learn about the increase in expenditure from provincial funds in secondary and primary institutions in the area of direction and inspection, scholarships and miscellaneous charges. It is explained by an increase of Rs. 17,000 under the head of secondary instruction in the province. (Croft, p.103).

Expenditure incurred in various categories of schools

An increase was registered mainly under the heads of secondary and primary schools and scholarships in the expenditure from local and municipal funds in the entire country. However, there was a decrease under both heads in the case of primary and secondary schools in the North western provinces.⁵ (Croft, p.103). The report cited the difficulty in determining which portion of local fund expenditure in the provinces was derived from the district rates and which from “transferred sources”⁶ (Croft, p.127) of revenue or from direct provincial assignments. The district boards spent Rs. 9,66,168 from local funds on institutions which were under the management or financial control of the district and municipal boards in the year 1886. The expenditure thus increased on municipal taxation. The cost of municipal schools to the rates came to Rs. 23,377 with nearly three quarters of the amount being spent on primary education. (Croft, p.127).

The zila schools under the management of the department were supported by local funds from 1887-88 to 1891-92, hence the local expenditure on secondary schools rose considerably. The secondary schools witnessed a small decrease in the amount spent from local funds and a small

increase from municipal funds. The primary schools witnessed a small increase from both the sources i.e., local and municipal. The government share of expenditure was mainly limited to European schools and the colleges and schools attached to them.⁷ (Nash, Progress of Education in India: 1887-88 to 1891-92, 1893, p.172).

There was an increase of total expenditure on English secondary schools for boys at the rate of 11 per cent from 1891-92 to 1896-97. This increase was fairly divided under every other head, though the amount derived from local and municipal funds exhibited a decrease. In this period, the total expenditure on Aided Anglo-Vernacular Schools had increased by Rs. 27,876 with more than the totality of this increase derived from fee collection. The amount from public funds decreased by Rs. 9,332 and Rs. 3,547 from "other sources".⁸ (Cotton, Progress of Education in India, 1892-93 to 1896-97, 1898, pp.161-162). The total expenditure on Vernacular secondary schools for boys registered an increase at the rate of 8 per cent (Cotton, p.164) while the increase was less in the case of Vernacular Middle schools. (Cotton, p.166).

Cost of education and distribution of expenditure: Provincial Revenues and Municipal and Local funds

During the quinquennium (1897-98 to 1901-02), the average cost of educating a pupil in a Vernacular secondary school remained stagnant for all provinces taken together. The cost of education in an English school was highest in Burma (Myanmar), Bombay (Mumbai) and the United Provinces. The Municipal and Local Boards constituted to a large extent as support base of secondary education in the United Provinces and Punjab than in the other large provinces. The responsibility of the district boards was nominal in the United Provinces, as despite the funds being sourced from the local government and passing through the local accounts the former had no say in the distribution of expenditure. The overall expenditure amounted to Rs. 2 ¹/₃ lakhs from Provincial revenues and Rs. 6 ³/₄ lakhs from local and Municipal funds.⁹ (Nathan, Progress of Education in India, 1897-98 to 1901-02, 1904, p.130).

The percentage of local expenditure of primary education on total education of the country was of the order of 55.3 in 1891-92; 59.3 in 1896-97 and 61.9 in 1901-02. The amounts showed a considerable variation from province to province with 47 per cent in the United Provinces. The variation depended to a considerable degree on the extent on which the local government entrusted the care of secondary and special education to local bodies. (Nathan, p.178).

A minimum of the burden of funding education was passed on to the recipients as per the figures of 1917, where scholars in Government schools paid Rs. 25.3 and in aided schools Rs. 21 annually; in 1922 the former paid Rs. 23.5 and those in the latter category Rs. 24. Hence it is evident that contribution from the parents was practically negligible towards the increasing cost of secondary education.¹⁰ (Ritchey, Progress of Education in India: 1917-1922, 1923, p.81).

Rise in cost linked to the rise in the status of teaching profession

It was clearly mentioned in the quinquennium report for the year 1917-22: (Ritchey, p.111). Nevertheless, the rise in cost does undoubtedly represent in most provinces a real improvement in the conditions of the profession. In the United Provinces, for example, of the new provision of forty lakhs for primary education no less than 22 lakhs have been devoted to raising the pay of teachers.

With the introduction of the erstwhile scales in April 1921, untrained assistants received as a minimum Rs. 12 per mensem, trained assistants Rs. 15 to 20 and the headmasters getting Rs. 20 raised to Rs. 30. 18 Meanwhile, between the same period, the construction of school buildings was undertaken on a large scale, with an exorbitant amount of no less than Rs. 23,84,943 spent in this manner. (Ritchey, p.113).

Impact on education- conditions in the United Provinces

In the year 1933-34, all provinces and administrations exhibited a considerable increase in total expenditure, except the United Provinces. Though the total decrease was only Rs. 0.90 lakhs, the government expenditure fell by Rs. 1.83 lakhs due to retrenchment. However, the income in fee collections showed a large increase of Rs. 4.15 lakhs from increased enrollment, but it met with a fall of Rs. 3.55 lakhs from other sources. ¹¹ (Education in India in 1933-34, 1936, p.10). All the other provinces registered an increase in expenditure between 1932-37, with the exception of the United Provinces, which reported a decrease of Rs. 1 lakh. This decrease in expenditure in the United Provinces was mainly attributed to a decrease in the number of schools. ¹² (Progress of Education in India: 1932-37, 1938, p.127).

A host of factors may be considered responsible for the decline in the number of schools in the United Provinces. One of the major issues was concerned with the routine inspection of schools by the government inspectors for the purpose. They were grouped in the category of provincial staff appointed by the Director of Public Instruction under the District boards. The same provincial inspecting staff worked under the Education department as an inspecting and advising agency subordinate to the divisional and assistant inspector of schools. ¹³ (Harrop, Further Report on Primary Education For Boys in United Provinces, 1926, p.18). In the years 1896-97, there were 9 Assistant Inspectors, but in the following year the appointment in the Kumaon division was abolished. There were 47 Deputy Inspectors and 57 Sub-deputy Inspectors during the year under report (1901-02) with an increase of 26 Sub-deputy Inspectors during the quinquennium (1897-1902). The inclusion of a number of indigenous primary schools in the system of public instruction necessitated a considerable addition to the subordinate inspecting staff. (Nathan, p.23). From 1932 to 1937 there were only seven circle inspectors against the requisite number of ten. Further, apart from the creation of a new post of assistant inspector of drawing and manual training there was no increase in the number of inspecting officers of any grade. Despite a marked expansion in girls' education the number of women inspectors remained the same. In the absence of the requisite staff the existing officials were gravely overworked, leading to unsatisfactory output. This fact of a much-required

increase in the staff had been recognized as an urgent necessity hitherto prevented because of financial constraints. (Progress of Education in India: 1932-37, p.30).

In the last ten years, as specified in the quinquennium report (1932-37) the task of inspection was entrusted by the district boards to education committees. In the municipalities, it was entrusted to the whole municipality with the appointment of education committees in some cases. Unfortunately, the report recorded that hopes of the spread of education among the rural masses remained unfulfilled as the education committees failed to confine themselves to their entrusted duty. Though some education committees functioned well but the majority shifted their attention to the power conferred with the membership of such committees. (Progress of Education in India: 1932-37, p.35). There were other problems as well surfacing in the reports of inspector's viz., in party strife and intrigue dissipating the energies of the chairman and members with no prospects of stability and efficiency in administration. Finally, the problem to associate local representation and local knowledge with the duty of government to carry out supervision had not been resolved. (Progress of Education in India: 1932-37, pp.35-36).

Conclusion

The progress of education in the period of this study was thus not a smooth affair faced with the complexities of financial funding as discussed above. It was an uphill task in the presence of other hurdles related to issues of ignorance and traditional conservatism among the people. Poverty, sickness and absence of affordable transport for children in remote areas were other factors impeding the growth of educational institutions in the United Provinces. The main issues in this context were related to bringing about facilitation and accessibility of education and educational institutions for the masses. In the present scenario there still exists the necessity of organizing literacy mission and drives ¹⁴ (Asthana, Pre Legislative Research, p.2) to contain dropout rate ¹⁵ (Asthana, Pre Legislative Research, p.5), continuation of mid-day meal schemes ¹⁶ (Asthana, Pre Legislative Research, p.3) and promotional campaigns for girls' education ¹⁷ (Asthana, Pre Legislative Research, p.5) to ensure awareness amongst and participation of the masses. The process of attainment of the goals and objectives of yesteryears is still in progress.

NOTES

1. In every province of India local rates were raised under statutory provisions for expenditure upon local wants, such as roads, schools, and medical relief; and the income raised in this manner was in nearly all cases administered by district boards having statutory powers. Croft, A. (1888). Review of Education in India 1886, with special reference to the Report of the Education Commission Calcutta, p.17.

2. In cases where the provincial grant was credited to local rates, it lapsed to provincial services, in the same manner as a special unspent grant would lapse. Hence as far as education was concerned, a provincial surplus of income above expenditure could not exist at the end of the financial year. But a local fund surplus could and did often exist. Though not implying that this surplus was available for expenditure. Education Department File No. 31 July 1888, Report of

the Indian Education Commission appointed by the Resolution of the Govt. of India, dated 3rd February 1882, p. 163, National Archives of India (NAI) New Delhi.

3.It may of course happen that the nominal income of any particular year exceeded the expenditure for particular reasons, but it was safe to consider the actual expenditure as equivalent to the income. These reasons were the availability of surplus, for instance in erstwhile Bombay the greater part of the local fund rates were collected at the close of the financial year ending 31st of March with land revenue and hence the availability of surplus. This working balance was essential for school expenditure till February. Similarly in the famine ravaged Indian provinces the collections of land revenue and local rates were suspended or remitted hence generating the need of a reserve fund. The famine related danger varied in intensity in different Provinces; and in order to maintain the balance between income and expenditure the local Department was the best judge of the amount which it had to spend. For these reasons the actual expenditure of each year is considered as practically equivalent to the income available for expenditure. (See Note 2 Above), p.163.

4.Transferred services here was the transfer to the district boards (constituted by Act XIV of 1883, in the North- western provinces and Oudh in supersession of the old district school committees) of many of the duties and functions now devolved on them by law, but up to that time discharged by Government officials. The administration of primary and middle vernacular schools had always been in their hands. Now they were also entrusted with important powers of supervision over the Government high schools at head-quarters, the cost of which (as also that of training schools) was charged to district funds though the administration continued to be departmental. (See Note 1 Above), p. 102.

5.(See Note 1 Above), p. 103. This was in the year 1886.

6.The newly constituted district boards mentioned above were given more powers and responsibilities than the district school committees which they had superseded. The boards were entrusted with the financial and administrative control of the village and town schools and management of boarding-houses, scholarships and endowments of zila schools along with a general financial control of the schools themselves. The aided schools with some exceptions were also placed under local control in matters of scrutiny of accounts, passing of bills and "general visitations and report." The income of the district boards from other sources comprised (a) a share of the district rates levied under Acts III and IV of 1878 and credited to provincial revenues, (b) an additional allotment from the general provincial revenues sufficient to meet the board's further liabilities; and it is added that (a) and (b) together "constitute an allotment from the general provincial fund, the first specifying the amount which is " literally due to the district", and the second the balance required to meet the " charges of all establishments transferred." Hence the policy thus inaugurated seemingly involved no change in the source from which the money was derived, but merely a change in its control viz., an assignment made from provincial revenues, and up to that time expended on Government schools, being now transferred (sources) to district boards together with the charge of the schools themselves. (See Note 1 Above), p. 127.

7.Nash, M. (1893). Progress of Education in India: 1887-88 to 1891-92, Second Quinquennial Review, Superintendent of Govt. Printing, Calcutta, p. 172.

8.The sources of income here referred to are of many different kinds. They include, on the one hand, contributions from district and municipal funds, and, on the other, the proceeds of endowments, subscriptions, and fees. These various sources of income, though all in one sense local, and therefore rightly to be distinguished from the assignments made by the Government from provincial revenues, yet differed widely in their nature and origin. Some were derived from taxation, imposed under the authority of legal enactments; others were purely private and personal, and depend on the will of individuals. Some imply self-denial and a readiness to incur sacrifices for the sake of acquiring or promoting education; from others that characteristic was absent. Cotton, J. S. (1898). Progress of Education in India: 1892-93 to 1896-97, Third Quinquennial Review, Darling & Son Ltd., London, pp. 161-162.

9.Nathan, R. (1904). Progress of Education in India: 1897-98 to 1901-02, Vol. I, Fourth Quinquennial Review, Darling & Son Ltd., London, p. 130.

10.Ritchey, J. A. (1923). Progress of Education in India: 1917-22, Vol. I, Eight Quinquennial Review, Superintendent Govt. Printing, Calcutta, p. 81.

11.Education in India in 1933-34 (1936), Manager of Publications, Delhi, p. 10.

12.Progress of Education in India: 1932-37 (1938), Eleventh Quinquennial Review, Darling & Son Ltd., London, p. 127.

13.Harrop, H. K. A. (1926). Further Report on Primary Education for Boys in the United Provinces with special reference to Rural Areas, Allahabad, p. 18.

14.Under the National Education Mission (NEM) Samgra Shiksha mission was launched in July 2018 with an allocation of Rs 37,383 crore (25% increase over 2021-22. The overall allocation for Samagra Shiksha of the total departmental allocation was 59% and 99% of the allocation for the NEM. Rajat Asthana, Pre Legislative Research, DGF Analysis Education.pdf, p. 2, <https://prsindia.org/budgets/parliament/demand-for-grants-2022-23-analysis-education>

15.As per the reports of the Ministry the most prominent reason for dropping out among girls in 2015-16 was engagement in domestic activities and engagement in economic activities for boys. The high dropout rate among girls at the secondary stage was also found to have a correlation with high incidence of child marriage in the findings of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development/Education in 2021. (See Note 14 Above), p.5.

16.Renamed as PM POSHAN by the central government in September 2021. The scheme has been allocated Rs. 10,234 crores in 2022-23 which is same as the revised estimates of 2021-22. (See Note 14 Above), p.3.

17. Such as distribution of free bicycles for girls from socio-economically disadvantaged groups or scholarships to tackle dropouts and setting up special education zones in areas with concentration of such disadvantaged groups. Creation of a gender inclusion fund to assist female and transgender students to ensure their access to education was also recommended. (See Note 14 Above), p. 5.

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