



Research Paper

Selected Indian Education Policies and Effects on Nationalism: A Overview

MUZAMMIL KHAN

Assistant Professor of History
Government First Grade college Tarikere

Abstract

Education policy played main role in intellectual well beings of any nation after the renaissance and scientific revolution. With emergence of nation state, all states try to educate their new generation with particular aims in mind to create a strong sense of nationality and regionalism. In the same way, during colonial rule of British and independent India, a sort of education policy was adopted to mold the national hood idea among the new generation. The first initiation of education policy started under British colonial in 1813 through charter act. In 1833, the Macaulay education policy put a strong base with English mode of teaching with the support and demand of western educated Indians like Rajaram Mohan Roy. After independence, the education policy of 1956 with main intension to infuse in the mind of students the idea of India and Ghandhian thoughts. The India education policy in general consisted on curricular, co-curricular and extra co-curricular activities. In this work, I am going to stress on the education policy in general.

Key Words: Education policy, nationalism, Charter Act, thoughts, western education,

I. Selected Indian Education Policies and Effects on Nationalism

Education is a cultural factor responsible for major social changes. Changes in attitude, basic pursuits, and values are the result of education. Public support for social reforms and progressive legislative measures comes because of education. Mass education is what can accomplish modernization at the grassroots level and, to a large extent, overcome problems of social integration.

In ancient and medieval India, education was largely religiously oriented and confined to an elite. The beginning of the state system of education in India Under British rule, it may be traced back to the year 1813, the Charter Act, when the East India Company was compelled to accept the responsibility of education of Indians. At that time, a lakh of rupees was set aside for education. There was a conflict soon thereafter between Classicists and Anglicizes among the officials of East India Company because there was some ambiguity in the language of the 1813 Charter Act. It could mean that the British had wanted to introduce Western education and English as a language. The Classicists were against the introduction of English and the emphasis on science and Western education that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the western nomenclature, and to render them, by degrees, fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population." The Resolution of March 1835 was the first declaration of the British Government in the sphere of education in India. (Grover, 1992)

II. Education policy of India from 1920-37

The Nagpur Congress passed a resolution in 1920 to the effect that children and young people should be withdrawn from schools and colleges that are owned, aided, and/or controlled by the British Government. Simultaneously, a large-scale effort was made to establish national schools and colleges in the various provinces of India. Thus, we find the establishment of national institutions within a year, such as Muslim University at Aligarh, Gujarat Vidyapith, Bihar Vidyapith, Kashi Vidyapith, and Bengal National University. Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith, Quami Vidyapith at Lahore, and so on. The India National Congress had created a movement in favor of nationalistic institutions at all levels, supported by the private initiative of Indian money and leadership. Thus we notice that during the period 1920 to 1937, there was a movement throughout the country in favor of private schools, colleges, and universities that were nationalistic in their approach and policies and were supported by the Indian Rajas, big landlords, and other wealthy people on the financial side,

but on the academic side the support had come from nationalist leaders at all levels. This was also the period when the Indian-language newspapers started flourishing. It all culminated in the scheme of basic education inspired by the leader of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi. A committee was appointed in 1936 with Dr. Zakir Hussain as Chairman to develop in detail a full scheme of basic education, which was discussed, debated, and passed in the 1937 Haripura Congress. Provincial autonomy was introduced by the British Government, and most of the provinces elected the Congress to power. So basic education was practically introduced throughout the country in 1937. (Raychoudhary, 1995)

2.1. Basic Elements of Education: Wardha Scheme The scheme of basic education was popularly known as the Wardha Scheme of Education. One of the central ideas, which, later on, created controversy, was the idea of craft work in school. Central to the idea of basic education, as described by the conference of national workers that met at Wardha in October 1937 with Mahatma Gandhi as the President, was that the process of education should centre around some productive form of manual work. This was the idea of socially useful productive work, as it was described later on by the Adishesiah committee in 1978. It was believed that if children participate in socially useful productive work, it will break down the barriers of prejudice between manual and intellectual workers and will help the development of a sense of dignity of labour. It was also considered desirable from the point of view of making knowledge related to life. The curriculum of basic education had three important aspects, namely: craft work, physical environment, and social environment. Basic crafts—such as spinning and weaving, carpentry, agriculture, fruit and vegetable gardening, leather work, or any other craft for which the local and geographical conditions were favourable; Mother tongue—the entire emphasis in the teaching of languages should be on mother tongue; mathematics—it was emphasized that the mathematics should be centred on the knowledge of business practice and bookkeeping. Social Studies in general should be centred on the knowledge of business practice and bookkeeping. Social Studies; General Science; Drawing; Music; Hindustani—the object of including Hindustani was to ensure that all children acquire some competence in the national language. (Kidwai, 2014)

2.2. Education Report of 1944: Sargent Report 1944 The only other important development during the colonial period was what is commonly known as the Sargent Report on Post-War Educational Development, issued in 1944. The Sargent Report accepted the idea of basic education as envisaged by the Central Advisory Board. It visualized two stages in basic education: the junior and the senior, the junior covering a period of five years and the senior covering a period of three years. The Sargent Report also mentioned that pre-primary school courses should cover a period of six years, and the normal age of admission should be about eleven years. Two types of high school were visualized: academic and technical. (Kidwai, 2014)

The Sargent Report recommended abolition of the intermediate course and a three-year degree course as the first degree of the university. Thus, we see that the Sargent Report laid the foundation of the present 10+2+3 system, recommended by the Education Commission (1964–66). (Kidwai, 2014)

III. Education since Independence:

Education since Independence an educational policy was adopted by the Indian Parliament in 1968. Education was made an integral part of the national development effort. After independence, there has been an effort to spread education to all levels of society. Statistics point to the fact that 99 percent of children in the age group 6–11 years have been enrolled in school. However, to bring the remaining into the ambit of universal primary education is proving difficult because some reside in inaccessible areas; there is a deep-rooted prejudice against educating girls; there are practical difficulties of distance and inaccessibility of schools; Moreover, the dropout rate is so high that universal elementary education (UEE) is quite an elusive goal. (Sharma, 2000)

Various steps have been devised to reduce the percentage of dropouts. Non-formal education to provide educational facilities for the drop-outs and to fulfil the desire for additional education in the grown-up drop-outs is being given a new orientation to make it purposeful and to attract a broad spectrum of the drop-out population. (Sharma, 2000)

Adult education programs cover the age group 1-35 and have been vigorously implemented by the government with the cooperation of many voluntary agencies. Even then, much has to be done to realize the targets, which are 100% coverage adults by 2000 A.D. (Sharma, 2000)

With regard to the pattern of secondary education, experiments have been going on since Independence. The 10+2+3 pattern of education, which was recommended by the Kothari Commission of 1965, is now being implemented in almost all the States and Union Territories of India. This pattern provides for two streams in the higher secondary schools: the academic streams paving the way for higher education and the vocational stream of terminal nature. However, very few schools have been able to provide this terminal education. As a result, schools with academic streams still abound, thereby defeating the very purpose of

reducing the acute competition for college education. In many states, education is free up to the lower secondary level, and in a few states, education is free up to the higher secondary stage. (Siddhalingaiah, 1975)

Higher education in India is imparted through about 180 universities and nearly 4500 colleges. In addition, there are several institutions imparting specialized knowledge and technical skills. Since education is a state subject, the state governments are free to open new universities. The University Grants Commission is an authority that dispenses grants to the universities. But its formal sanction is not necessary to open a university. Taking advantage of this provision, many state governments have opened a large number of universities in recent years. (Kidwai, 2014)

The tremendous increase in the number of students and of educational institutions has given rise to the term 'education explosion'. No doubt, this has resulted in serious problems such as inadequacy of financial resources and infrastructure and dilution of personal attention to the education and character formation of the students. Also, there is the unwanted side effect of the enormous increase in the number of educated unemployed. However, we cannot overlook the positive effects of the education explosion. A mere increase in the percentage of literate people does not indicate a qualitative change in the educational standards of the people and a substantial improvement in the manpower resources of India. Lack of employment opportunities cannot be blamed on the availability of educational opportunities and on the higher standard of education of the employed and the unemployed. Thus, while population explosion in India may signify a serious problem, education explosion can, by no means, be viewed as an unalloyed evil. (Kidwai, 2014)

Uncertainty and vacillation have marked the government's policy regarding the medium of education of Indian system. Mahatma Gandhi wanted basic education to be imparted through the mother tongue in both primary and higher education in school and higher education institutions. Baring this in mind, the Constitution provides that facilities for primary education in the mother tongue should be provided to all Indian citizens and that, for this purpose, the Central Government may issue directives to the state governments. Thus, the requirements of linguistic minorities are properly attended to fulfil their aspiration. Even before independence, most of the students in schools had their education through the regional language/mother tongue in primary level and in English in higher education. (Gandhi, 1938)

While the government policy in this respect has not changed, a significant increase in the number of schools, primary and secondary schools, imparting education through the English medium is a significant development; thousands of nursery schools that have mushroomed since the last decade purport to impart education to infants through English. This is an unwanted development that has been deprecated by educationalists and political leaders in post independent India. Regarding the medium of instruction in colleges and universities, many state governments have already decided, in principle, to switch over to the regional language; however, the implementation in this respect has remained very slow due some technical reasons; in fact, the choice of medium of instruction at the college and university level poses a serious paradox. If regional languages are fully adopted in imparting college education, the problem of mobility from one region to another for higher education in India will be seriously hampered. But continuing higher education through the English medium is unfavourable by many politicians, and for some, the country makes no sense. Thus, the Indian dilemma in respect of education still continues. (Gandhi, 1938)

There is a general feeling that the curricula adopted for different stages of education are substandard. This impression of imparting education in regional system, is not borne out by facts. The syllabus for irrelevant and various courses in schools and colleges have been updated and upgraded. The NCERT (National Council for Educational Research and Training) has set the right tone in this respect. Regarding recent changes in the curriculum in schools and colleges, a mention may be made of the introduction of physical education and services like National Social Service (NSS) and National Cadet Corps (NCC) as part of the curriculum and of the inculcating of emotional national integration through the teaching of the India National Movement. Constant review of the syllabi and methods of teaching in light of the innovations and methods adopted in advanced countries has certainly resulted in improved standards. This is not to say that the average standard of teaching and average rise in proficiency of the students has decline considerably in the contemporary era. In many colleges and schools, examination has become a cumbersome process, and real assessment of the intellectual and other capabilities of the students is not done properly. (NCERT, 2005)

Work-oriented education which was advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and others is not practicalised. However, the vocationalization of education has proved to be a difficult task. The present pattern of education setup 10+2+3 with a vocational stream has able to touched only the fringe of the problem. The fact is that people resent being taught crafts and traditional occupations in the school. However, modern commercial education, which impacts skills in typing, shorthand, reception, and the like, has met with better popular approval and demand. The core of the issue is whether education and employment should be linked. Such delinking will have the great 'merit' of reducing attraction for college education. But de-linking jobs from degrees and certificates is fraught with unforeseen dangers. In any case, employment can be provided only on the basis of certain qualifications. If the qualifications are not to be determined by the universities and other

conventional examining bodies, the same work will have to be done by the recruiting agency or somebody else. Besides, the scheme of not prescribing the bare minimum educational requirement for posts will pave the way for gradual erosion of standards necessary for different posts. As pointed out earlier, education is not to blame for the widespread unemployment in India. (NCERT, 2005)

In recent times, new educational opportunities have been invented, one such being correspondence education. Today virtually every university in India is offering correspondence courses for different degrees and diplomas. In fact, correspondence education has opened new vistas for the educational system, which could not successfully meet the challenging problem of providing infrastructure for multitudes of new entrants into the portals of higher education. The public demand for higher education was initially met through evening colleges; now correspondence education has come to the attention of the worried education administrators. The latest innovation of open universities has also been introduced in India in the form of Nagarjuna University at Hyderabad. An open university imparts education only through correspondence; and, in this respect, is to be differentiated from the regular universities which take up correspondence education in addition to the college education. Correspondence education provides an important means for drop-outs to improve their qualifications and for the employed the means to improve education and service prospects. In time, the glamour of college education may decline if correspondence education is made very effective. The Indira Gandhi National Open University has been created at a national level. (Shankar, 2006)

IV. Conclusions

The educational system in India faces numerous problems relating to educational institutions, teachers, and students. Mismanagement of all types in educational institutions and maladministration of educational programmes are quite common. Commercialization of education, particularly technical and professional education, has come to stay; the opening of private medical colleges, engineering colleges, and polytechnics has become an attractive financial proposition. Teachers' discipline is rampant. While teachers may have genuine problems, their unions have increasingly resorted to indiscipline and coercive means to achieve their goals. Basic commitment to their profession is lacking in many teachers. The student community, which is a sizable section of the population and comprises persons in the impressionable age group, is facing and causing a lot of problems. The many drawbacks of the educational system and the bleak prospects of employment are increasing the level of frustration in the student community. The nefarious role of politicians and the undesirable influence of movies have been responsible for instigating students to take to agitations of different kinds. Teachers and students have been politicized through the energetic efforts of the political parties and local leaders. Law and order problems involving teachers and students are on the increase. The examination system is in a mess. The capitation fee system is a glaring example of the role of money power in education.

References

- [1]. Gandhi, M. (1938). *Hind Swarj*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publications.
- [2]. Grover, G. &. (1992). *A New look at modern Indian History from 1707 to the present*. New Delhi: S. Chand and company private ltd.
- [3]. Kidwai, A. (2014). *New Directions in Higher education*. New Delhi: Viva books New Delhi.
- [4]. NCERT. (2005). *National curriculum framework*. New delhi: NCERT.
- [5]. Raychoudhary, H. (1995). *History of India, a detail study of political, economic ,social and cultural aspect from 1526 to the present times*. New Delhi: Surjeet publication.
- [6]. Shankar, M. (2006). *English Kalike mattu samajika neya*. Bangalore: Ambedkar vaad prakashana.
- [7]. Sharma, L. (2000). *History of Modern India*. Delhi: Konark publications.
- [8]. Siddhalingaiah, M. (1975). *Democracy and Education*. Mysore: Sharath Prakashanan.