



## DEVELOPMENT OF NORMAL SCHOOLS IN THREE PRESIDENCIES OF BRITISH INDIA DURING THE SECOND HALF OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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### **Abstract**

*The idea of teacher training in India had actually been originated from the 'monitorial system' prevalent during ancient period. The formal teacher education programme in India started its' journey with the training of primary school teachers by the Christian missionaries at the end of the eighteenth century. The training of primary school teachers was imparted in training school, popularly known as the 'Normal' school. The Danish Missionaries established the first teacher training institution (Normal School) at Serampore in 1793 for the training of primary school teachers. Gradually, the training of primary school teachers began to develop in various parts of the country and at the end of the nineteenth century the primary teachers' training took a definite shape, especially in the three Presidencies of British India: Madras, Bombay and Bengal. In the present paper, the researcher has made an attempt to study the scenario of normal schools in three presidencies of British India, Madras, Bombay and Bengal.*

**Keywords:** *Primary Teachers' Training, Normal Schools, Presidencies.*

### **1. Introduction**

Teacher education means professional preparation of teachers. It takes into account the holistic development of a teacher's personality and enables her/his to face various challenges in the society. The programme of teacher education is organized for various stages of school education like pre-primary, primary, elementary and secondary. The idea of teacher training had actually been originated from the 'monitorial system' prevalent during ancient period in India. The formal teacher education programme in India started its' journey with the training of primary school teachers by the Christian missionaries at the end of the eighteenth century. Introduction of English education on western lines demanded the need for trained teachers in schools in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, though the process had already been started earlier in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Normal schools were established for the training of primary school teachers in different parts of British India. Initiatives for training of teachers were taken both by the private sector and government sector.

The training of primary school teachers was imparted in training institution, popularly known as the 'Normal' school. However, differences in nomenclature had been observed, e.g. in Bombay this was known as training college. The Danish Missionaries established the first teacher training institution (Normal School) at Serampore in 1793 for the training of primary school teachers. Gradually, the training of primary school teachers began to develop in various parts of the country and at the end of the nineteenth century the primary teachers' training took a definite shape, especially in the three Presidencies of British India: Madras, Bombay and Bengal.

#### **1.1 Wood's Despatch**

The famous Wood's Despatch of 1854 gave utmost importance to teacher training and recognised "the great deficiency in the facilities for teachers' training and desired to see the establishment, with as little delay as possible, of training." As a result of the recommendations made by the Wood's Despatch, normal schools started functioning all over the country, especially in the three Presidency towns. By 1858, in Bombay Presidency, there were four normal schools, one each at Poona, Ahmedabad, Dharwar and Karachi. There were four normal schools for vernacular teachers' training in Bengal up to 1857 located at Hoogly, Guwahati, Dacca and Calcutta. By 1858, there were 6 normal schools in Madaras at Mayavaram, Cheyur, Vellore, Mangalore, Berhampore and Ellore.

**1.2 The Stanley's Despatch of 1859** The Stanley's Despatch of 1859 put greater emphasis on teacher training than the Despatch of 1854 and stated that the normal schools mainly served the purpose of vernacular teachers. The despatch found the unsatisfactory conditions of teacher training and lack of trained teachers in English schools. As per the Despatch "the normal schools established during the last five years have been confined almost exclusively to those for vernacular teachers." (Education of Teachers in India, 1968, Vol.I page8) Only exceptions were the Madras School and the Bombay Normal classes attached to colleges and main English schools. These schools prepared teachers for both Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular schools. A model school and a practicing school were attached to the Madras School. Though, the conditions were not satisfactory. The age-old controversy regarding the relative importance of professional training and general education had been going on. It was considered that a good general education was more important than professional training. "The assumption was that all teachers in high schools would be graduates and a graduate is so well-versed that he needs further training."....."the training course really meant further intensive study of the English language and the Western science." (Education of Teachers in India, 1968, Vol.I page9)



## 2. Training Schools for Masters in Madras

There was only one institution in Madras Presidency to train teachers for both Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular schools. The Madras Normal School established in 1856 used to impart general instruction and training, the usual course for teachers. In Madras, the government normal school had a model and practice teaching school. The Madras Normal school extended its functions and prepared students for University examination as part of their function. But in 1872, it came back to its original objective of professional training. Five minor Institutions were there in the interior and two branch classes for the training of vernacular teachers. In 1856 the Central Institution was founded. It is evident from the Report for 1860-61 that the Government Normal school at Madras received two important accessions in the appointment of a Second Assistant Training Master and of a Master for one of the two Elementary Schools attached to the Institution. The Normal students thus got the advantage of supervision of their practice teaching by a trained Master. The appointment of a Second Training Master enabled the Director to constitute a class of European Military students. These students were qualified for employment as School-masters in the Schools attached to the European Regiments where such services of trained teachers were highly needed. The Departments and the number of students that each department had in the school are as follows:

- a) English Normal Class-----26 students
- b) Preparatory Normal Class.....25 students
- c) Military Students' Class.....13 students
- d) Vernacular Normal Class.....13 students
- Total.....77 students were under training
- e) Vernacular Practising School.....25 students
- f) Model School
- g) Practising School

Total number of students in Model School and Practising School were 341.

The results for the year 1860-61 were not so satisfactory like the previous years. Only seven students of English Normal Class obtained certificates- two of the 4<sup>th</sup> class, four of the 6<sup>th</sup>, and one of the 7<sup>th</sup>. In the Vernacular Normal Class five students passed, one student in the 8<sup>th</sup> class and four students in the 9<sup>th</sup> class.

Of the five Provincial Institutions two Institutions one each at Vizagapatam and Cannanore were established in 1860-61. The Normal School at Vizagapatam was opened for the benefit of the Schools in the Telegu country. Mr. Bickle, Assistant Training Master in the Normal School at Madras, was appointed as the Head Master. A trained student of Madras School holding the certificate of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade was appointed as his Assistant.

The Normal School at Cannanore on the Western Coast was found to supply the wants of the Malabar and Canara Districts. This School was placed as a temporary measure under Mr. Garthwaite, the active Deputy Inspector of these Districts as because no trained Master acquainted with the languages of the Western Coast was available at that time. There were two Assistants of Mr. Garthwaite, one of them was a trained Teacher who left the Madras Normal School at the end of 1859.

There was a considerable falling off in the number of students who passed for certificates in the Provincial Normal Schools at Vellore, Mayaveram and Cheyur. Only ten candidates had qualified against thirty three in the previous year. The reason was that several students deferred their examination with the view of qualifying for certificates of a higher grade. Of the three schools Vellore School was the best and the school at Cheyur would be transferred to Trichinopoly.

The seven Government Normal Institutions consisted of five Schools and two Normal Classes. These Institutions were not merely Vernacular Training Schools, but also qualified teachers for Anglo Vernacular Schools. Successful candidates for the University Entrance Examination were sent from six Government Normal Schools, the aggregate number being 21, of whom 12 came from Madras Normal School.

The Government of Madras took the following notice of these Government Institutions and of the Private Normal Schools on reviewing the Education Report of 1865-66: It was mentioned that, the Report on the Government Normal School in Madras had not been favourable. The Director of Public Instruction stated about defective arrangements, faulty management. In the general examination for Certificates, the students' performance was poor in teaching practical and in many cases they proved themselves inferior to the untrained Candidates. The government would take steps for upgrading the efficiency of this important Institution that was maintained under the management of its first Principal. However, the Normal Schools at Vizagapatam, Trichinopoly, Vellore and Cannanore were all performing fairly. The condition of the Normal School at Trichinopoly was very satisfactory. The Reports on the Training Institutions supported by the Church Missionary Society at Palamcottahh, by the Society for the Propagation of Gospel in Foreign Parts at Sawyerouram and at Tanjore, and by the Christian Vernacular Education Society at Madura were more or less favourable.



It is evident from the DPI Report of Madras, for the year 1866-1867 there were 11 Normal Schools in Madras with an enrollment of 1,619 students. In the training schools of Madras both theoretical and practical training was imparted for teaching profession. Three grades of certificate were recognized by the Education Department and the duration of the course of instruction for each grade was twelve months. During the training period, no student could engage himself in any other vocation or attend any other institution, without taking permission from the Head of the Training school. The curriculum consisted of the subjects like school organization, discipline and the art of teaching. Students had to appear for a written examination for all these subjects. To gain practical skill as a teacher, the trainee teacher had to teach in a practicing school under the supervision of the training master. The student also learnt how to instruct a class in drill and gymnastics, to do black board work, map drawing, reading etc.

The numbers of training schools in Madras were 42 with an enrolment of 1,131 students in 1896-97. As per the Government report there was a decrease in the number of students during the five years. But the Director was not surprised to it as "The introduction of the Madras Educational Rules some years ago created a very active demand for certificated teachers, as schools could not be recognized unless a certain proportion of the staff consisted of qualified teachers." The report also showed that only a minority of the male teachers were uncertificated in Secondary and Primary schools. 30 training schools out of 42 were maintained by the Department, 2 were under District Boards and 10 schools were under Mission management. Among 10 training schools under Mission management, 7 schools were Aided and 3 schools were Unaided. There was one Government school exclusively for the Muhammadans, one for Mappillas, and one for Panchamas (Pariahs). The Mission schools were for the Native Christians. The schools were also classified according to their grade of certificates: 8 schools prepared students for Upper Secondary (High), 21 schools made preparation for Lower Secondary (Middle) and 13 schools were for the training of Primary teachers. The number of students in training schools for Upper Secondary, Lower Secondary and Primary teachers in 1896-97 were 73, 223 and 835 respectively. Stipends were granted in Government schools according to the grade. Stipends were also given in other schools.

After an examination consisting of both theory and practical tests, certificates were awarded in the three grades. The examination was conducted by a representative board and was open for the untrained teachers who could get a certificate of untrained teacher. During the last five years the number of students appeared in the written examination for Upper Secondary Grade, Lower Secondary Grade and Primary Grade were 520, 1,324 and 4,022 respectively. Among these 154 passed for Upper Secondary, 389 for Lower Secondary and 1,368 for Primary Grade.

### **2.1 Training Schools for Mistresses in Madras**

There were 19 training schools for Mistresses in Madras with an enrolment of 317 female students in the year 1896-97. Four schools were maintained by the Government and fifteen schools were under Mission management, aided from Provincial Revenues. Nearly one-third of the female students were from Madras city. The Director showed serious concern for not having any provision of female teachers' training for teaching profession in 11 districts of Madras. These normal schools were also classified according to grade like Upper Secondary, Lower Secondary and Primary. Stipends were provided at the same rates as for male students along with a "guardian allowance" of Rs. 5 per month for females who were not the residents of the town at which the school was located. In an average the percentage of success was higher than male students at the examination during the last five years. The number of women teachers employed in teaching profession after training also increased steadily year after year.

### **3. Training Schools for Masters in Bombay**

In Bombay, there were six Normal Schools which were all Government Institutions. These schools used to supply qualified Teachers for Vernacular Schools. The two most principal Institutions were located at Poona and Ahmedabad. Mr. Howard, in his Annual Report of 1862-63, heartily accepted the experiment of turning these two Training Institutions into Vernacular Colleges. The reason was that the purely Normal Training Schools produced men deficient in general education. The experiment of combining the teaching of higher subjects through the medium of Marathi, with the usual functions of a Normal School was tried out but failed. They thought such Colleges would be possible only when large numbers and several generations of scholars would be habituated to think and express themselves on scientific subjects in the Vernacular languages. It has also been expressed that "The training of Native School Masters in Normal schools and Training Colleges is such an important matter that we cannot afford to allow any diversion of energies of those to whom the task is entrusted. The Institutions of this kind at Poona and Ahmedabad are working fairly. Those recently established at Belgaum and Hyderabad have made a good beginning." (Selections from Educational Records of the Government of India Vol I, Educational Reports, 1859-71, page no. 228)

Extracts from the Report of the DPI in the Bombay Presidency, 1866-67, Page 125, paragraph no. 44:

"There are altogether 5 Normal Schools under the department, with a total number of 165 pupils on the rolls, being an increase of 1 school and 15 pupils over the last year's return. I am not at all satisfied with the working of these schools, especially of the so-called Poona Training College. Attention to the subject will be given during the present year."



The eight training schools for male in Bombay were all for primary teachers. Due to plague, the school at Hyderabad in Sind was closed and as a result, number of students decreased during the last five years from 705 to 592. Five normal schools at Bombay city, Poona, Dharwar, Dhulia and Hyderabad were maintained by Government. The school at Ahmednagar was an aided one, managed by the Christian Vernacular Education Society. Two un-aided schools were situated at Rajkot for Kathiawar and at Kolhapur for the Southern Mahratta country. All Government schools were described as “fully equipped and efficient”.(page 231). The duration of training course at Dhulia and Rajkot were of two years. The best students of the Dhulia normal school had to come at Poona training school for their third year course and the Rajkot school sent its’ third year trainees to the Arts College at Ahmedabad. Examination was held at the end of each session and certificates were issued after passing each examination. The Secondary Teachers’ Certificate (S.T.C.) examination was held in 1899. “The Theory of Teaching Course consisted of reading three books prescribed by the Department and the practice of teaching was examined by Inspectors in actual teaching situation. The two papers introduced by Bombay, for theory, still remain nomenclature in many universities. They were: (1) History of Education and General Methods and (2) Special Method, School Organization and Hygiene.” (Education of Teacher in India Vol. I, 1968 page 16)

### **3.1 Training Schools for Mistresses in Bombay**

During the period under review (1892-97) training schools for females in Bombay had increased from seven to ten, where as the number of students fell from 175 to 162 during the five years. A small school at Dharwar, supported by some of the District Boards of the Southern division, was opened. Sisters of the Convent School at Byculla, in the city of Bombay, developed a class for Europeans and Eurasians. A class was formed by the Education Society at Hyderabad in Sind. The two Government Schools at Poona in the Deccan and Ahmedabad in Gujarat, were the most famous training schools for mistresses in Bombay. An English girls’ school was attached to these schools attended by the children of wealthy families. The two schools at Rajkot and Kolhapur, which were maintained by the Native States were running successfully. The Convent classes at Karachi and Bombay had been working well. The Municipal class at Karachi, under the supervision of the Convent Sisters was equally efficient.

### **4. Training Schools for Masters in Bengal**

In Bengal, there were 24 Government Normal Institutions. Among these 20 were Vernacular and four were English Departments. The four English Departments were opened in the year 1864-65 in the Normal Schools at Calcutta, Hooghly, Dacca and Patna. It is evident from the extract of Director’s Report for the year 1865-66, that the four English Departments proved to be a failure in the object for which they were established. The reason behind it was that “Students with the proper qualifications cannot be induced to enter them, because they are not affiliated to the University, so that attendance at them is no qualification for admission to the First Examination in Arts, whilst the Syndicate declines to accord the privileges of School Masters to the Pupil Teachers who join them. Unless some concession is made on this point, there seems little probability of obtaining any adequate results from these Departments, and it will be advisable to abolish them.” (Selections from Educational Records of the Government of India Vol. I, Educational Reports, 1859-71, page no.224)

The Vernacular Training Institutions in Bengal were more successful. Among the 20 Institutions, 12 were intended to train Masters for Vernacular Middle Class Schools, 7 Institutions were especially for the training of Gurus for indigenous Schools and 1 Institution at Dacca was for female Teachers.

From the Director’s Report of 1865-66 it is found that three Normal Vernacular Schools were opened in East respectively at Bhagulpore, Purneah, Gaya, and Chuprah. Three new Normal Schools were opened at Mymensingh, Comillah, and Coomarkhali of East Bengal for the training of Masters for Middle Class Vernacular Schools. Four similar types of Schools started functioning in Behar, located of Gurus for Village Pathshalas were opened under Baboo Kassi Kanth Mookerjee, a new Inspector. These Schools were situated at Rajsahi, Dinagepore, and Rungpore. Each school provided for 75 stipendiary pupils. Baboo Bhudeb Mukherjee had started another similar School at Midnapore in South-West Bengal. A Private Normal Institution for Mistresses was in Calcutta.

The Normal School at Gowhatty in Assam, had been reorganized at a reduced expense as it was not running successfully. Sanctioned was made for establishing additional Normal Schools at Tezapore and Sebsaugor in order to make better provision for the supply of Masters for the elementary Vernacular Schools of the Province. A Normal School was also opened at Mozufferpore during the year 1866-67.

From the Report of DPI in Bengal it was found that there were 8 Normal Training Schools for higher classes and 19 Normal Training Schools for lower classes in Bengal. Number of students on the Rolls on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1867 in Normal Training Schools for higher classes and Normal Training Schools for lower classes were 468 and 819 respectively.



Besides the Government normal schools, there were aided normal training schools for teachers run by private agencies. Name of the agencies and number of the students on the roll (monthly average) is mentioned below:

Name of the Agency	Number of Students
Christian Vernacular Education Society, Calcutta	20
Ladies Association, Calcutta (for Mistresses)	10
Church Missionary Society, Kishnaghur	18
Church Missionary Society, Telgurria, for Santhals	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>

(Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Home Department, No.LXVII note on the State of Education in India During 1866-67, Extracts from the Report of the DPI in Bengal, 1866-67, page: 104)

“From these statements, it will be seen that an important advance has been made during the year in the means of raising a supply of Teachers qualified for conducting the Middle and Lower Class Schools throughout the country.” (Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Home Department, No.LXVII note on the State of Education in India During 1866-67, Extracts from the Report of the DPI in Bengal, 1866-67, page: 104)

The number of Training Schools for masters was reduced from 21 to 20 and also the number of students from 887 to 865 during the last five years (1892-97) in Bengal. There were two types of schools: Government schools trained up to a high standard, tested by an examination and Aided schools, run by the Missionaries to train teachers for their Primary schools. The Government schools were total 13 (earlier it was 15) in numbers and enrolment was 574. In the seven Aided institutions, there were 291 students in all. Out of the 13 Government schools, 4 schools were of the third grade, 1 second grade and 8 were first grade schools. Out of the 291 students in the Aided schools, 53 were girls in a school for the Sonthals managed by the American Baptist Mission.

#### 4.1 Training Schools for Mistresses in Bengal

There were no Government training schools for females in Bengal. The female schools under Missionary management were subsidized liberally from Provincial Revenues. The number of female training institutions had decreased from 10 to 9 during the years 1892-1897 but the number of trainees rose from 300 to 432. There were four aided schools in Calcutta and according to the government report these schools alone were the proper training schools preparing students for examination. Rest of the institutions were little better than the ordinary Primary schools for girls. In 1894-95, an examination for female teachership certificates was first conducted.

#### 5. Conclusion

The training of primary school teachers in pre-independent India was introduced by the Christian Missionaries. For the purpose of training normal schools were set up in different parts of three presidency towns of British India. Recognizing the importance of training, efforts were taken both by Government and Private enterprises. The nature of training was comprehensive and emphasis was given on quality and practical aspect of training. This development of primary teachers' training helped in the further advancement of 'Normal' schools in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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