

**BRIEF COMMUNICATION****Education System and Teacher Training in India****V.M. Vadivelu\*****INTRODUCTION**

Education is the basic necessity to any society. According to a Tamil poet, the deeper we dig, the more we discover. The role of teacher also involves the character building of the taught apart from designing and implementation of the curriculum. Teachers cause desirable and anticipated revolution in the society silently. In short, a teacher inspires and shapes the destiny of the nation in class rooms. Realizing the above facts, the teaching profession is considered as the noblest profession in India.

Educational institutions shape a person's orientation towards social action and try to overcome the constraints due to the inequality, poverty and social structure. Being a developing nation, it may be relevant for Ethiopia to understand the Educational system of other countries. In this context an attempt has been made to discuss the basics of the educational system and teacher training in India with special reference to the state of Tamilnadu ( meaning land of Tamils ) located at the southern tip of the Indian peninsula.

**Educational background of Tamilnadu**

Tamilnadu has been consistently in the fore front, among the states of India, in the implementation of educational programs over the years. The over all literacy rate in the state has gone up from 62.7% in 1991 to 73.47% in 2001 which is much more than the national literacy rate. The female average literacy rate has gone up by more than 13% from 53.33% in 1991 to 64.55% in 2001. The ratio of male literacy to female literacy has come down from 1.4 in 1991 to 1.27 in 2001, revealing the narrowing down of gender inequality in the state. The average number of students per primary, upper primary secondary and higher secondary schools are 119, 327, 398 and 1124 respectively. The teacher pupil ratio in the above mentioned institutions is 33, 41, 40 and 30. The drop out percentage up to primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools is 13.85, 32.10, 57.37 and 75.81 respectively.

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This exploding phenomenal growth either in over all literacy rate or female literacy rate in this state, no doubt, is a dramatic one which prompts us to go into the successful details of its educational system, the different cadre of teachers who are responsible for such an astonishing growth and how they are trained. Further Tamilnadu may be considered as typical and model state reflecting the Indian scenario regarding educational system, teachers and their training.

### **Educational system in Tamilnadu**

The structure of education in Tamilnadu is based on the national pattern of 10+2+3, (also 10+2+4 and {10+2+Respective professional course duration} patterns does exist) consisting of five years of primary and three years of upper primary/middle school education for the age groups of 6-11 and 11-14 respectively both put together as primary elementary education, followed by secondary and higher secondary education of two years duration each. The entry age in standard 1, which is also called as class or grade, is 5 plus. There are also pre-primary classes for the age group of 3-5.

After secondary or high school education, a student can join higher secondary course or industrial training institute (ITI) or polytechnic college. The higher secondary school certificate enables the students to pursue their studies either in universities or colleges for higher education in general academic stream leading to bachelors' degree like B.A., B.Sc., B. Com., B.C.A., and B.B.A. (of 3 years course duration) and technical and professional courses such as B.E., B. Tech., B.D.S, ( of 4 years course duration) and M.B.B.S., B.P.T., B.L., and E.T.T (elementary teacher training). After graduation, the student can pursue post-graduation or masters degree course of either two years duration (or) three years duration. Students can also join the professional courses like B.E.d. or B.L. after under graduation. On completion of post graduation a student may work for M. Phil. or Ph.D. degree.

### **Primary school teachers**

They are broadly classified into two categories namely nursery or Montessori school teachers and primary school teachers. The teachers at this level play a very important role in society as they are largely responsible for molding the young impressionable minds. These teachers mainly deal with children in the age group of 4-10 years. As the child comes out of the protected environment of his home for the first time and is away from his parents, these teachers are a parent substitute. What a child learns and experiences during his early school years can shape the child's view about himself and the world around him which would later play an important role in his success at school work and also his personal life making him a good social being. Therefore the nursery and primary school teachers are responsible for the social, emotional and intellectual growth of children.

### **Upper primary school teachers**

At the upper primary school level the teachers are responsible for students in the age group of 11-13 (classes 6-8). They help children to develop their use of languages, explore mathematical ideas and introduce them to history, geography, science and creative arts. They also train the students in physical education, music, reading, elocution, dramatics art and craft. Creative techniques in teaching are used for lower classes, for older students the teaching is more formal including regular home work and tests.

### **Secondary and higher secondary school teachers**

The secondary and higher secondary school teachers specialize in one or two subjects and teach those subjects to all age groups in secondary and higher secondary schools. They prepare the students for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and 12<sup>th</sup> grade examination (conducted by either State Board or National Board. Further a student has choice to register with either the State Board or the National Board). More emphasis is given on imparting knowledge of the subjects and these teachers play an important role in the overall personality development of the students.

### **Training of primary, upper primary and secondary higher secondary teachers**

The basic educational qualification to enter into an elementary teacher training school, which offer training to those who later become primary and upper primary school teachers is a pass in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The training extends for a period of two academic years. The admissions to such training schools are made on merit basis among those who have applied for the training. There are more than 774 elementary teacher training schools in Tamilnadn and the total intake of the students is roughly 4380 per academic year. It is to be emphasized here that nearly 600000 students appear for the 12th grade examination and only less than 0.008% of these students join in elementary teacher training schools per annum. Therefore, according to this statistics, the majority of the students who seek admission in elementary teacher training schools normally have an interest and affinity towards teaching profession. Thus they become teachers by choice and not by chance.

The academic qualification for the entry in to a college of education is a bachelor degree in any one of the subjects taught in the secondary school level. Students with post-graduate degree in any one of the subjects taught in higher secondary school level, are also eligible for the admission in a college of education. The program is of one year duration leading to the degree of bachelor of education B.Ed. B.Ed. degree holders with an undergraduate degree become qualified to teach their concerned subject for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in a secondary school and those with post-graduate degree are qualified to handle 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade in a higher secondary school. Totally there are 22 B.Ed. colleges and 3180 B.Ed. graduates come out as secondary and higher secondary teachers per annum.

Any education oriented program has to have emphasis on both the principles of education and the mode of impart of knowledge. For example a B.Ed. program with chemistry as a major subject has to revolve around the means and modes related to impart the knowledge of chemistry and practical training at or up to secondary or higher secondary school level for which the concerned resource persons are required to be well equipped with a proper graduation, post graduation degree in science (B.Sc./ M.Sc.) with chemistry as the main subject having appropriate combination of allied science subjects (such as, physics and

mathematics, physics and biology, geography and geology and likes). Needles to mention that these two programs (i.e) B.Sc. and B.Ed. can neither be amalgamated nor can be acquired simultaneously as they are not only two different graduation programs under different eligibility requirements but also pertain to two different faculties (i.e.) science and education respectively. However, when these two degrees are acquired, they become contingent to each other as the former will enrich in “what to teach” and the later will help in “how to teach and impart”. **Obviously knowing ‘how to teach’ with out acquiring ‘what to teach’ becomes meaningless.**

When India was in the early stages of independence there was dearth of Indians for various jobs connected with the building of infrastructure of the nation. Post graduates, graduates and diploma holders were just snapped as soon as they come out of the institutions. Even under such a demanding situation the required academic eligibility to become primary, upper primary and secondary school teachers was not compromised and diluted, as the lives of younger generation and hence the development of the nation is entrusted to the safe hands of a teacher. Then the Indian planners in the field of education were fully aware of the fact that if fountain head is polluted containers can not be free from contamination.

The salient features of a teacher training institution whether it is elementary school teacher training or college of education, are as follows:

1. There is a rigorous and very serious training.
2. The teacher trainees should compulsorily stay in the hostel attached to the institution.
3. The institution will be situated in rural area, as far as possible away from the urban area.
4. There are supervisors to monitor the day-to-day activities of the trainees.
5. The students are trained to get up early in the morning and to do some physical exercise to keep them physically and mentally fit.
6. Dress code for the trainees will be strictly followed.
7. Every day before the breakfast there will be a prayer for 15 minutes
8. Very strict rules and regulations regarding the discipline of the trainees will be followed. Any trainee found not abiding by the prevailing rules and regulations will be terminated from the institution after sufficient warring.
9. In the evenings, a group of students will be engaged in playing games and the other group of students will be working in the kitchen garden of the institution from where they get part of vegetables and greens. These groups will be exchanged once in a week.
10. Study hours will be strictly maintained in the evening after dinner under the supervision of the instructors from (06.00 to 08.00) P.M.
11. Certain primary and upper primary schools will be attached to elementary teacher training schools and secondary and higher secondary schools will be attached to college of education where the trainees will have teaching practice periodically through out the period of their study.
12. In order to develop the trainees as good administrators and to bring out their leadership qualities in them various committees like mess committee, purchase

- committee recreation committee, accounts committee, games committee etc are formed among the students to look after the day to day affairs of the hostel
13. The members of various committees will be exchanged cyclically once in a month to ensure the transparency both financial as well as administrative.
  14. To create political awareness among the trainees, mock-parliament will be conducted every week, where a group of trainees will assume the role of ruling party and others will act as the members of the opposition party. The subject for the debate will be either the important political incident of that week in the nation or the institution or the hostel.
  15. In order to develop the practice of savings and regulating their expenses each and every institution will have a mini bank known as Sanjayeka Savings Bank which will be operated by a committee of students and supervised by a teacher. There will be a co-operative store in the institutions managed by the students where the students can purchase their needs cheaply.
  16. Days of national importance like Independence Day, Republic Day and Teachers Day will be organized and celebrated by the trainees in a grand manner.
  17. Free medical camps will be arranged periodically which will be sponsored by the philanthropists. Trainees will take all efforts to bring the suffering to the camp and get treated.
  18. The trainees will also be provided a special training in first aid and are deployed to serve the people in the event of national calamity like cyclone and flood. May be this develops the necessary patience and service oriented attitude which are the two eyes of a teacher.

Generosity is the most important to human beings in general and teachers in particular. Lord Rutherford, the Nobel Prize winner who discovered the presence of nucleus in an atom, had been one of the outstanding examples of teachers who had taken interest in the work of his students. Instead of trying to attract more attention to his own work, Rutherford identified and motivated a number of his student researchers who made noteworthy discoveries in the later period. This essential quality of generosity is developed in the minds of trainee teachers so as to share their knowledge with the students generously and whole heartedly.

Any profession is inherent with certain discomforts depending on the nature of the profession, and it is applicable to teaching profession also. But during the training period they are made to understand the discomforts of the profession which is an essential part of discharging any profession. "Devotion to profession is the highest form of worship of God", says Swami Vivekananda. They are trained to devote themselves to their profession gradually.

Water never assumes or imposes a shape. The formless one alone can have so many forms representing zero-ego state. The trainee teachers are gradually brought to such a state of zero egoism over the period of their training.

Any growth would be considered complete only when it is associated with the growth of spiritual component in human being. Science can not answer every thing, for example, the questions regarding love, faith and beauty. However science and spirituality are similar in

their quest to understand the secrets of life. During the training period students acquire spiritual understanding of life to a certain degree which is necessary not only to maintain emotional equanimity while experiencing difficulties but also to be generous, to critically analyze things and tend towards zero ego state. Chinese philosopher Confucius says “I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand. The trainees are provided practical training in almost all fields pertaining to education and social life. As Confucius says, as they do, they understand and follow.

The nature of training that one undergoes in such a teacher training institution transforms him not only as a good teacher but also a good citizen, administrator, substitute for parent and social worker.

The trainees are made to realize that they are supposed to live up to the reputation and expectation of their profession.

After graduation, they come out knowing fully well about the significance of their profession in the society and that they are entering in to a more responsible phase of life in which they need to have more commitment and discipline.