

Cochin Education Code: Prefixing and Suffixing the Advancement of a Native State

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Abstract: Education is the process of acquiring knowledge and information that leads to a successful future. Past generations understood it well, and they emphasized the importance of education and its role in one's life. Education is a key factor in the progress of any society. The erstwhile state of Cochin had been in the path of educational progress, with the introduction of the modern system of education. The educational statistics and reports published by the Cochin government point out such a state of affairs. The steady progress necessitated the introduction of a systematic policy from time to time. A milestone in that systematic policy of reviewing the prospects and retrospect in education led to the formulation of the Cochin Education Code in June 1911. Its successful implementation with the needed changes from time to time was a milestone in promoting social upliftment and the concept of a progressive state.

Keywords: Education Code, Play Schools, Vernacular, Poverthies, 3Rs, Sirkar, Aided, Unaided

Introduction

The general picture of educational status in Cochin in the 20th century revealed that the State had much to do with the development of elementary education of the masses. The old Play Schools were, in their way, satisfying the cravings of the people to have their young ones instructed in the rudiments of knowledge. In every village, there were two or three Play School masters. They commanded the respect of the villagers and wielded great influence over the pupils and their guardians. They carried the essentials of knowledge to the doorsteps of the poor and the lowly. Towards the last decades of the 20th century, the village schools gradually began to disappear. At last, they ceased to exist altogether in towns while they continued as dwindling survivals in rural parts. The levy of fees, strict hours of attendance, and a change in the curriculum of studies not familiar to the simple folks of the village brought hardships upon the poor parents. They were accustomed to paying their school masters when they could and to sending their children to school when they chose, found themselves tied hand and foot by a cut-and-dried system.

The necessity for a system of state education was recognized as far back as the year 1818. In that year, a proclamation was issued by the Cochin Raja, establishing vernacular schools in several of the *Proverthies*.

Besides the three R's, the pupils were taught astrology and the advanced pupils, Sanskrit also. These schools were abolished in 1833, but were reopened as Taluk schools in 1835. There is a record of the existence of an English school at Thrissur in 1835. In 1845, two more English schools were opened. One at Trippunithura for the education of the members of the ruling family, and the other at Ernakulam. In 1865, the school at Ernakulam was placed under the charge of a European Master of Arts. In 1874, it was affiliated with the Madras University as a Second Grade College. By 1873, English schools were opened in all parts of the State. In 1890, the school at Trichur was made a High School.

The passing of the grants-in-aid rules in 1889 gave rise to numerous primary and secondary schools. It facilitated the opening of aided high schools at Ernakulam, Trichur, Cochin, and Kunnankulam. There was an unaided High School at Chittoor. In the year 1887, the first Sarkar school for the education of caste girls was opened at Trichur in honour of Her Majesty. At the close of that decade, there were six other Lower Secondary and thirty Primary schools for girls with a strength of nearly 3,300. There were four industrial schools in the state. The strength of these four schools was 107. The pupils were trained in carpentry, tailoring, the manufacture of mats, coir, etc. These schools have been opened by the Christian missions. The question of technical education was not then addressed by the state. Besides these, there were 382 special schools, including the Normal School, some maintained by the sarkar and others receiving Sarkar grants. Sanskrit was taught in 107 of these, Arabic in 65, Hebrew in 4, Gujarati in 1, Hindustani in 3, and Music and the Bible in 83 and 118, respectively. The total number of pupils receiving instruction in schools of all descriptions rose from 22,488 in 1891 to 39,600 (27,837 boys and 11,763 girls) in 1901. The effort of the Christian Missions towards the education of the lower classes was particularly noteworthy.

The following statistical table shows the advancement made in the spread of education under state control for the decade between 1073 and 1082 M. E. (1897-98 to 1906-07)

Year (M.E)	No of schools	Sirkar	Aided	Unaided	Total expenditure
1073	1042	69	112	862	1,10,422
1074	1190	60	108	1022	1,15,051
1075	1239	60	108	1071	97,569
1076	1298	60	121	1108	99,381
1077	1434	182	-	1252	99,985
1078	1490	180	-	1301	97,965
1079	1323	56	123	1044	99,354
1080	1194	56		121	1,14,283
1081	1184	55	165	924	1,20,830
1082	1123	55	183	885	1,36,659

This table pointed to certain characteristic features of the education system of the state. The first was that the major portion of the educational work of the State was done without any help from the Sirkar. The second noteworthy feature was that the Christians stood foremost in the percentage of school-going population that were under instruction. But their education was confined only to primary and Lower Secondary grades. To every church was attached a primary school, which the children of the congregation were easily brought to attend, and where they were taught reading, writing, and certain scriptural lessons. The influence exercised by the native clergy in this regard was supplemented by the missionaries, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The Hindus formed a little over 68% of the population. The proportion of literates among them was comparatively low due to the high percentage of the lower castes, who, on account of their social disabilities, were very backward in the matter of education. The Mohammedan section of the population formed nearly 7% of the total strength, and by nature of their occupations in life and general disinclination to take to literary pursuits stood in the way of their educational progress. The third feature was that a very small number of Sirkar Primary schools, there being only 55 out of which 10 form part of institutions of higher grade and 21 are purely girl's schools, as against 183 which were aided and 883 which were unaided. The last feature was the very backward feature of technical education in the State. There were no fewer than 276 schools for special education, of which 2 were Sirkar and 4 aided. Out of this total, only 5 were industrial schools, and the rest came under Arabic, Hebrew, Music, Hindustani, and Gujarati. This teaching qualification was poor, especially in aided and unaided schools. These defects were pointed out in the various administrative reports from 1074 onwards. In reviewing the report of 1074 ME, the British Resident observed that the striking feature and the healthiest feature is the immense amount that is done by the people themselves without State aid and a penny of assistance from the Durbar, maintain a constantly increasing number of elementary schools and where the classes of the community were eager to maintain their schools, reforms for advancing education must be taken by the State. The Cochin durbar expressed its financial difficulties in that regard, but still adopted progressive reforms.

In 1876, Mr. Sealy was appointed Director of Education with powers to inspect schools in the State. Also, to supervise the five district schools that then existed, which imparted education in English. In 1879, a Deputy Inspector was appointed to assist the Director. In 1890, elementary vernacular schools were opened in different parts of the State, and grants-in-aid were ordered to be given to private schools that imparted primary education. These schools were then placed under the control of an officer called 'Superintendent of Education,' and inspecting officers were newly appointed for the purpose. The Dewan Thiruvengkatachariar proposed the establishment of an independent inspecting agency for vernacular schools in 1891, to which Mr. Sealy objected, and Mr. Hannington, the then British Resident, also agreed. He observed that it was not done in British India, where the whole system of education was under the general control of one head. He pointed out that, however, the Director of Public Instruction of Madras was aided and supported by a very large staff. The

next year, the Diwan suggested taking up the direction of all education in the State, as in Mysore, and the appointment of an Education Secretary to assist him. In 1891, when Mr. Sealy resigned, Mr. Cruickshank was appointed Secretary, and for the inspection of Anglo-vernacular and vernacular schools, a Superintendent was appointed with two Deputy Superintendents and Inspecting School Masters to assist him.

By an order dated 15th December, 1897, the district schools of Irinjalicuda, Mattanchery, Ernakulam, were also brought under the control of the Diwan from 1898. In the subsequent years, the Syrian Girls School, the Mar Ignatius School of Kunnankulam, St Albert's School, Ernakulam, Mattanchery Anglo Vernacular School, Trippunithura, Convent School, Elathuruthy, and St Thomas High School of Trichur were added to the list. When Mr. Cruickshank retired, the post of Educational Secretary was abolished in 1903, and the most important change that was subsequently introduced was the appointment of Mr. Davies in 1905 as Special Inspecting Officer for schools working directly under the Dewan.

In 1908, the official policy of the State regarding education was proclaimed after reviewing the various representations made on the subject. The chief provisions were as follows:

- The Government resolved to appoint a Special Educational Officer to draw up a complete scheme for reforms. He was to be the responsible head of the department to initiate and carry out the schemes with special reference to the improvement of primary education.
- After the Special Officer completes his work, the department would consist of an Inspector of Schools assisted by three deputy inspectors.
- When the grant-in-aid systems develop and primary education is brought completely under Government control, the strength of the inspection staff is to be increased. The Ernakulam College Principal's scale of pay was to be increased.
- A separate teacher to be appointed for Form VI for each High School, to afford necessary relief to the Head Master and to enable him to spend more time in supervision according to the Madras Educational Rules.
- For the improvement of the equipment of High Schools, eg, apparatus, library books, appliances, a sum of Rs. 2000 to be provided.
- A separate primary school to be opened at Trippunithura for pupils of the backward classes.
- Regarding educational grants, a sum of Rs3,000 to be raised to 5,000 for aiding primary schools which were not then in the aided list at the rate of one rupee for each pupil of average daily attendance.

For opening new elementary schools, the following places were selected for 1084 ME, and the Special Educational Officer was to submit the necessary proposals and proposition statement accordingly – Cochin-Kanayanur, Cranganur, Mukundapuram, Trichur, Talapilli, and Chittur. The proposal to open an Industrial

school at Trichur, to give stipends to the students belonging to the backward classes and to encourage the private Art and Industrial schools by the grants of substantial aid, would be given effect in 1084. A special grant of stipends and scholarships was to be given for Sanskrit learning, and Sanskrit pandits for the various Sirkar institutions was to be recruited from the Sanskrit *Patasala* at Trippunithura. All vernacular Village Girls' schools would be declared free, and special arrangements would be made to supply such schools with music and needlework Mistresses, as well as for teaching kindergarten, drill, and action songs as far as possible. Six new Girls' schools were to be opened to give each Taluk two schools well-equipped and maintained as standard schools. To increase the supply of fully trained female teachers, scholarships were to be instituted, two in the Lower Secondary department and two in the High Schools department. The Ernakulam hostel scheme was of utmost importance and should be taken up first. The Chief Engineer was requested to draw up plans and estimates for the hostel to accommodate fifty students. The next schools for developing the hostel system would be Trichur. The question of exempting teachers from training who have rendered approved service of more than five years in any recognized school would be considered in due course, and a lump provision would be made in the budget for the training of teachers in Saidapet and Calicut under the existing rules. Mr. Arthur Mayhew, Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Madras, was appointed Special Educational Officer and also as the Chief Director of Education, subject to the control of the Dewan during the period of his employment. The above detailed scheme came into force from July 1083.

In the Diwan's note dated 29th February 1908, it was recommended that an Industrial schools should, as a first step, be opened in Trichur in which all the chief industries in the State should be taught and their standard raised, and that stipends should be given to the students belonging to the backward classes to encourage them to undergo a course of training in such industries in this school. It was also recommended that an art school should be opened under Government management, failing which the private enterprise should be encouraged by the grant of substantial help. Their proposals were approved in the final proceedings of the Durbar in 1908. Mr. Pope was also appointed Special Education Officer in June 1909. He recommended that the Government should open a Central School of Training in Trichur to train teachers for technical and industrial education and estimated the cost of the Central Training school at Rs3,564 per annum, which was approved. In 1910, a revision scheme was brought into the Central Training school, making provision for teaching Elementary mathematics, English (handwriting, spelling, composition), Geography, History of India, Drawing, Physical training, Needle work, Malayalam (Composition and Translation). The increase in expenditure for education in 1911 was Rs 15,109 per annum. Five new schools for backward classes, six new schools for girls, ten new primary schools for boys, increased. In June 1911, the *Cochin Education Code* was enacted. Schools were divided into vernacular and Anglo-vernacular and departments according to the stages of instruction given to the pupil in them.

- Lower Primary, in which the pupils are taught in classes Infant, I, and II
- Upper Primary, in which the pupils are taught in classes III and IV
- Lower Secondary or Middle, in which pupils are taught for Forms I, II, and III
- Upper Secondary or High School, in which pupils are taught for Forms IV, V, and VI, ending with the Matriculation examination of the Madras University, or the School Final Certificate examination

The Institutions that educated special schools were divided in the State into-

- Training school for teacher's industrial schools
- Technical and commercial schools
- The Indigenous schools were classified as follows-
- Advanced schools for teaching Sanskrit, or any other Oriental classic
- Elementary schools for teaching vernacular
- Elementary schools for teaching the Quran

All private educational institutions need to fulfil the prescribed procedure for recognition. The standards of examination were fixed for each level. The regularity and punctuality of attendance of both teachers and pupils need to be strictly enforced. The qualifications for teachers in schools were prescribed as follows

Class or Form	Professional minimum qualification
Infant I, II, III, IV	Elementary grade, and Kindergarten trained
Form I, II, III	Secondary grade, trained
Form IV, V, VI...	Licentiate in Teaching, trained

No fees would be charged in purely Sirkar vernacular schools. In Anglo- vernacular schools, the minimum rate of fees should be as follows.

Primary Department	Rs. A. P
<i>Infant class</i>	0 3 0
<i>Class I</i>	0 4 0
<i>Class II</i>	0 6 0
<i>Class III</i>	0 9 0
<i>Class IV</i>	0 12 0
Lower Secondary Department	
<i>Form I</i>	16 0 0
<i>Form II</i>	20 0 0
<i>Form III</i>	24 0 0

Upper Secondary Department

<i>Form IV</i>	32 0 0
<i>Form V</i>	36 0 0
<i>Form VI</i>	40 0 0

Collegiate Department

Intermediate	64 0 0
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Girls in Anglo-vernacular schools in all the grades or the college had to pay only half the rate. Scholarships were open to boys and girls alike every year. It was confined to bona fide natives of the State. The monthly value of scholarships was as *follows*-

Designation	Monthly value	To Whom Upon
Senior University	<i>Rs 15</i>	The best student who passes the Intermediate examination in the first class from the Ernakulam college, and who desires to pursue further course of university studies
Junior University	Rs 10	The first six students who pass the Matriculation or the School final examination in the first class
Upper Secondary	Rs 5	The first students who pass the Lower Secondary Scholarship Examination
Lower Secondary, Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular	Rs 9	The first fifty pupils from class IV of vernacular and Anglo-vernacular schools who pass the Primary Scholarship Examination and are under the age of 12

The grants-in-aid to schools, including technical schools, would be continued with the object of extending and improving the secular education of the people, and would be given impartially to all schools that give a sound secular education, subject to the conditions, and with due consideration for the requirements of each locality. The untrained teachers in Sirkar and aided schools had to pass special examinations. The Sirkar would continue to maintain a certain number of night schools for the benefit of the communities that cannot avail themselves of day schools owing to their daily occupation. The hours of work were from 7 pm onwards, in periods of 50 minutes each. No fees were charged, and the whole course was for two years. Private night schools were eligible for aid under the ordinary grant-in-aid rules. All hostels, whether private or Sirkar, would work under definite rules approved by the Diwan. The textbook committee would select the needed books for the curriculum.

The results of the work of the Code were encouraging. The total number of Sirkar schools rose from 107 in 1087 to 117 in 1088, and the aided schools from 164 in 1087 to 168 in 1088. The number of unaided schools portrayed an increase from 544 in 1087 to 1041 in 1088. This general increase in the number of schools of all classes was encouraging, especially given the accommodation provided, the equipment furnished, and the staff

appointed in the Sirkar and aided school were by the requirements of the Code in all cases. The total number of pupils in Sirkar, aided and unaided schools in 1088, as compared with the previous year, is given in the following table-

Institutions	1088 M.E (1909-10)			1087M.E(1908-09)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Sirkar	13060	6,384	19,444	11,811	5,740,	17,551
Aided	13,229	5,001	18,230	12,191	4,625	16,816
Unaided and						
Indigenous	15,476	6,426	21,902	8,592	4,250	12,842
Total	41,765	17,811	59,576	32,594	14,615	47,209

32.6% of the educational work was done by the Sirkar institutions, 30.6% by aided agencies, and 36.8% without any help from Sirkar, as against 37.2, 35.6, and 27.2% respectively in the previous year. Of the pupils under instruction, 70% were boys and 30 percent were girls as against 69% and 31% respectively in 1087. Of the total pupils under instruction, 52.4% were Hindus, 41.8% Christians, 5.6% Mahomedans, and 2% Jews, as against 53.9 percent, 41.1%, 4.8%, and 2% respectively in 1087. Collegiate education was given in the Sirkar College at Ernakulam. 61 students appeared for the Intermediate examination of the Madras University, of whom 24 passed. There were five female students in the college as against three in the last year. The total number of pupils given Upper Secondary Education was 1,299 in 1088 as against 1,201 and 1,246 respectively in 1087 and 1086. The total strength of the High School Departments of eight Sirkar High Schools was 893, as against 839 and 873 in 1087 and 1086, respectively. The total strength of aided High schools rose from 323 in 1087 to 1088. The total strength of the aided and Sirkar Lower Secondary Schools also rose. Education was given in 1,314 schools as against 803 in the previous year. Of these, 115 were Sirkar, 158 aided and the remaining 1041 unaided schools. The large increase in the number of indigenous schools was also worthy of notice. The number of Night schools that worked during the year was 17 of which 13 were Sirkar and 4 aided. There was a steady progress in female education also.

The general statistics of education controlled by the state from 1083M.E to 1088M.E(1907-08 to 1912-13) is shown below-

1083	57	189	380	50	18,927	1,36,956
1084	75	289	410	62	21,633	1,78,213
1085	98	250	423	72	30,331	2,29,506
1086	102	216	490	128	30,061	2,78,827
1087	107	164	571	200	36,766	3,37,383
1088	117	168	602	265	51,457	3,75,520

Conclusion

The above details show the pace of development in the field of education in Sirkar, Aided, and Unaided schools, which the native state of Cochin commenced through a well-mastered policy of the government. This was the same in the case of Collegiate education also. A well-formulated code of education drove the state further to progress, the fruits of which were the harbinger of success in the future.

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