



Education in Goa After Liberation: Expansion, Reform and Transformation

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Abstract:

The liberation of Goa in 1961 initiated a comprehensive transformation of its education system, transitioning from a colonial and restricted structure to one integrated with the national educational framework of India. This paper examines the evolution of education in Goa from the post-liberation period to the present, focusing on policy reforms, institutional expansion, and qualitative transformation. It analyses the role of state intervention in the universalization of primary education, the expansion of secondary schooling, and the development of teacher-training institutions, particularly in the context of the recommendations of the Jha Committee (1962).

The study further traces the growth of higher education through the establishment of arts, science, professional, and technical institutions, culminating in the creation of Goa University in 1985. Recent initiatives such as the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), the Indian Institute of Technology Goa, and the National Institute of Technology at Farmagudi are also examined to highlight contemporary developments. The paper argues that while the initial decades were marked by quantitative expansion, later phases emphasized diversification, quality enhancement, and alignment with regional developmental needs, underscoring education's central role in Goa's post-colonial transformation.

Keywords: Post-Liberation Goa; Educational Reforms; Jha Committee; School Education; Higher Education in Goa; Goa University; Technical and Vocational Education.

Introduction

The liberation of Goa from the Portuguese colonial rule on 19th December 1961 marked a decisive turning point in the social, political, and cultural history of the region. Among the most significant areas requiring immediate reform was education, which until then had remained limited in reach, elitist in orientation, and largely disconnected from broader national educational developments in India. The Portuguese rulers

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disregarded the local languages, i.e., Marathi and Konkani. The Portuguese language was the medium of instruction at the primary, secondary, and higher secondary schools. However, these institutions were limited, and the students had to travel long distances to get there. The poor transport system further made it difficult for people to access education.

The Portuguese followed an education policy that suited their colonial agenda. Although Konkani was the language for communication, the majoritarian Hindus educated their children in Marathi at the primary level. Marathi was considered the medium of education and culture.

Many prominent Goan Hindus volunteered in opening Marathi-medium primary schools and ran them at their cost. The Portuguese government denied them any financial support. They believed that these schools promoted anti-Portuguese sentiments among the young learners while fostering love for India, its culture, and its leaders. However, the educational quality of many privately run Marathi-medium schools remained limited. These schools lacked proper infrastructure, especially in the rural areas. Schools usually functioned in temples, local landlords' houses, or similar premises instead of properly built school buildings. The teachers who were employed were mostly Maharashtrians, and most of them were untrained. The teaching aids were inadequate or absent.

Prior to liberation, Goa lacked any educational institution offering instruction beyond the secondary school certificate (SSC). For higher education, Goan students had to go outside the state to places like Mumbai, Pune, Belagavi, Dharwad, and Hubballi. However, this privilege was available to very few. For a majority of people, education concluded with the SSC. While only some of the privileged students could afford higher education in Portugal.

At the time of liberation, there were 476 primary schools, including 176 government and 300 private ones. Most of the private primary schools used Marathi as the medium of instruction. In respect of secondary education, there were only 95 schools with an enrolment of 9,260 students and one Portuguese-medium higher secondary school with an enrolment of about 900 students. There were also two institutions, Escola Medica and Escola Pharmaceutica, catering to education in medicine and pharmacy faculties, and Escola Normal to train primary school teachers.

The liberation of Goa and its integration with the Indian Union on 19th December 1961 necessitated changes in the educational system of Goa so as to bring uniformity in the educational pattern at par with the rest of the country. Soon after the first popular government was installed, the first Chief Minister, Dayanand alias



Bhauasaheb Bandodkar, made a major policy decision to spread schools throughout Goa so that education reaches the remotest parts of the state. From 1961 to 1987, the education system saw a qualitative expansion and betterment. The focus was on the advancement of school education through its expansion, diversification, and improvement. Later, the focus shifted towards advancing higher education throughout all talukas of the state.

Integration with the Indian Union necessitated not only political and administrative changes but also the restructuring of Goa's educational system to align with national objectives such as universal elementary education and the expansion of secondary schooling. Consequently, the post-liberation period witnessed deliberate state intervention aimed at expanding access, standardizing curricula, addressing language questions, and establishing institutions for higher and technical education.

The paper argues that rapid quantitative expansion characterized the initial decades, while subsequent phases prioritized qualitative improvement, diversification, and institutional consolidation.

Literature Review

The history of education in Goa has attracted scholarly attention primarily in the context of colonial rule, language policy, and post-liberation socio-political transformation. Studies on Portuguese colonial governance highlight the limited scope of formal education during the colonial period and its close association with missionary institutions and administrative needs. Scholars such as Teotonio R. de Souza have examined the broader cultural and social impact of Portuguese rule in Goa, including its influence on education and language practices.

Research on post-liberation educational developments has often focused on the transformation of institutional structures and the role of the Indian state in expanding educational access. Several works emphasize that the integration of Goa into the Indian Union in 1961 led to the introduction of policies aimed at universalizing primary education and aligning the education system with national frameworks. Government initiatives such as the expansion of primary schools, introduction of higher secondary education, and establishment of regulatory bodies played a crucial role in this transformation.

Another important strand of scholarship examines the relationship between language and education in Goa. Afonso Botelho's studies on language policy and education highlight how linguistic identities and medium-of-instruction debates shaped educational opportunities in the region. His research shows a close relationship between language choices in schools, social mobility, cultural identity, and political discussions



about Konkani and Marathi. These studies underscore the complex interaction between educational policy and linguistic politics in Goa.

B. D. Naik's work on educational development in Goa also highlights the rapid expansion of educational institutions after liberation and the role played by government policy in strengthening educational infrastructure in the state. Scholars studying higher education in Goa have also emphasized the role of Goa University and affiliated colleges in expanding academic opportunities after the mid-1980s. The establishment of Goa University in 1985 represented a major turning point in the development of higher education in the state, enabling the creation of postgraduate programs, research facilities, and academic collaborations.

While existing studies have explored various aspects of education and language policy in Goa, there remains scope for a comprehensive historical analysis that situates educational expansion, institutional development, and language policy within a single analytical framework. This paper attempts to address this gap by examining the transformation of the education system in Goa from the period immediately following liberation to the contemporary era.

Research Gap and Research Questions

Although several scholars have examined individual aspects of Goa's educational development, such as language policy or institutional expansion, relatively few studies offer a comprehensive look at the transformation of the education system after liberation in 1961. Existing literature often focuses on specific themes such as linguistic politics or higher education without situating them within the broader process of educational reform and institutional development in the state. Furthermore, the relationship between educational expansion, government policy interventions, and socio-economic development in Goa has not been sufficiently explored in an integrated manner.

The historical evolution of educational institutions, policy frameworks, and language debates requires a systematic analysis that connects these elements within a broader narrative of post-liberation transformation. To address these gaps, the present study is guided by the following research questions:

- How did the education system in Goa transform after liberation in 1961?
- What role did government policies and institutional reforms play in expanding educational opportunities in the state?



- How did language policy influence educational development and access to education in Goa?
- In what ways did the expansion of higher and technical education contribute to the socio-economic development of the region?

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative historical research approach to examine the development of education in Goa after liberation. The research is based primarily on documentary analysis of official records, government reports, policy documents, and institutional publications related to the education system in Goa.

Primary sources consulted for the study include legislative acts, education committee reports, government statistical publications, and official documents issued by the Government of Goa and the Government of India. These materials offer helpful information about policy decisions, institutional developments, and the expansion of educational infrastructure over time.

In addition to primary sources, the study also makes use of secondary literature such as scholarly books, journal articles, and academic studies dealing with education, language policy, and socio-political developments in Goa. These sources help contextualize the historical developments and provide interpretative perspectives on educational reforms in the region.

The analysis follows a historical-analytical framework, examining the evolution of the education system in chronological phases beginning with the period immediately after liberation. Key policy interventions, institutional milestones, and changes in language policy that influenced educational development receive special attention. By combining documentary evidence with historical interpretation, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the transformation of education in Goa during the post-liberation period.

Educational Development after Liberation

The Government of India appointed a committee in April 1962 under the chairmanship of B. N. Jha to review the educational system in Goa and recommend measures for integration with the Indian educational framework (Government of India 1962).



The committee submitted its report in June 1962. The recommendations aimed to establish a uniform educational pattern that aligned with the general system used in other Union Territories. The school system was to comprise three tiers: the primary school of five-year duration, three years of middle school, and three years of higher secondary school. Primary education was to be free and compulsory for children between the ages of six and eleven. The minimum age for admission to the school system was set at six years old. The committee recommended using the mother language as the medium of instruction in primary schools.

Given that this was a transitional period, the Committee recommended maintaining the pre-liberation period's syllabus with a few minor modifications. The committee recommended replacing Portuguese history and geography with Indian history and geography, specifically focusing on Goa.

For secondary education, the committee recommended a pattern similar to the one already existing in New Delhi. It also recommended that the secondary school system be affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi. The committee also prescribed changes to the syllabus with a view to upgrading the teaching program and providing for the transitional period. However, the government decided to maintain the status quo regarding secondary schools, which were allowed to continue their affiliation with the Secondary Board of Education, Maharashtra.

The government accepted the recommendations and implemented them in June 1962 itself. Since there was a shortage of qualified teachers initially, even unqualified teachers were appointed. The government promoted the opening of primary and middle schools throughout Goa, both in the government and private sectors. Since there were no qualified teachers available in the Marathi, Konkani, and English mediums, individuals with only a middle level of education were appointed teachers, and thereafter, they were given training.

By the years 1968–69, there were approximately 1048 primary schools with an enrolment of about 92583 children. Though primary, middle, and secondary schools were open in various parts of Goa, student coverage was not satisfactory due to a lack of awareness about education among parents. However, the policy of opening schools in the rural areas had a positive outcome, as the literacy rate increased greatly from 45 percent to approximately 57 percent by 1981 and approximately 75 percent in 1991.

Institutional Expansion

During the tenure of Smt. Shashikala Kakodkar in 1978, the government decided to have its own Secondary and Higher Secondary Board and to get de-linked from the Maharashtra Secondary and Higher Secondary



Board. Its basic aim was to have an autonomous institution conduct secondary examinations locally and provide the required inputs to the government to frame education policies that could meet the needs of the time.

The development of secondary education after liberation was not as significant as that of primary education. However, secondary education did register substantial growth. In the year 1961-62, there were 96 secondary schools, including five government-run schools with approximately 10,000 students, compared to 269 secondary schools in 1965-66, of which seventy-seven were government schools with a total enrolment of approximately 37,000 students. In 1968-69, the number of secondary schools rose to 394, out of which 201 were government schools with a total strength of approximately 60,000 students.

The Portuguese Lyceum was converted into a higher secondary school with English as the medium of instruction and affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi. The existing Portuguese-medium secondary schools were either discontinued or converted to high schools affiliated with the Secondary School Certificate Examination Board Maharashtra. Before liberation, there was no teacher training school in Goa. Following liberation, the Jha Committee recommended the establishment of a secondary teacher training college.

This recommendation was approved by the government. However, a secondary teacher training college under the designation of Institute of Education was founded by the Nirmala Niketan, a Christian missionary society of nuns, in 1965. Initially, it was a female college, but in 1965 it became co-educational.

Higher Education and Technical Education

Before liberation, Goa had few higher education institutions. However, the most notable institutions of higher education were the Medical School and the Normal School. Later, the Escola Medica was divided into two independent colleges, namely, the Medical College and the College of Pharmacy. In addition, several arts and science colleges also sprang up immediately after the liberation.

The first two colleges, which were established within six months of the territory's liberation, were the Dhempe College of Arts and Science, which was founded by the Goa Education Society at Panjim on 20th June 1962, and the other, Chowgule College of Arts and Science, started by the Chowgule Education Society on 23rd June 1962 in Margao. These were followed by yet another college, St. Xavier's College, started by the Diocesan Society of Education, at Mapusa in 1963. The Carmel Education Society established another arts and science college for women near Margao, Salcette, in 1966. This was followed by the



College of Commerce, founded in 1966 by the Goa Education Society (Dempo Commerce College). The government also started an engineering college at Panjim in 1967. In 1972, the Mormugao Educational Society launched a new Arts and Commerce College at Vasco da Gama. For the purpose of research in postgraduate education, a Center of Postgraduate Instruction and Research was started in Panjim; it was affiliated with Bombay University. Goa University was established on 30th June 1985.

The establishment of Goa University marked a significant phase in the development of higher education in the state. These colleges offered access to higher education in disciplines of arts, commerce, science, technology, etc. The colleges of Goa were affiliated with Bombay University from 1962–63 to 1985–86, keeping with the cultural and educational relations of Goa and Bombay. In the field of technical education, the only facilities that were available before the liberation were the Escola Technica and technical schools at Panjim, Margao, and Mapusa.

Soon after the liberation, the Escola Commercial and Industrial at Panjim was developed into a government polytechnic, which now offers instructions in the three-year diploma course in civil, mechanical, and electrical engineering. Over the years, Goa has recorded steady growth in technical education. The number of technical schools increased from seventeen in 1961 to thirty-one in 1987 and to thirty-five in 2008. The number of government engineering colleges increased from one in 1967 to five in 2020, while the number of government polytechnics increased from one in 1963 to five in 2020. The Industrial Training Institute was founded in 1966, and today their number has risen to fifteen, catering to the students' needs in technical education. The establishment of the National Institute of Technology at Farmagudi and the Indian Institute of Technology in Goa has further strengthened technical education in the state. BITS Pilani, Goa branch, has also been of benefit to brilliant students from Goa. Overall, the state has a strong engineering education structure in place.

There are colleges catering to the fields of architecture, music, art, law, agriculture, and nursing, and, in recent times, integrated BA B.Ed. and BSc B.Ed. institutions have enabled students to choose their desired streams and courses. This stable rise in the variety of courses has opened new opportunities to the student community across the state of Goa.

One of the satisfying aspects of higher education in Goa is that in all sections girls have outnumbered boys. In Goa, girls not only outnumbered boys in higher education, both general and technical, but also surpassed them in academic achievements. This demonstrates Goa's general growth and liberal approach to social behavior in terms of women's emancipation and empowerment.

Language Policy and Education in Goa

Language has played an important role in shaping the development of education in Goa. During the Portuguese colonial period, Portuguese was the official language for government and the main language of instruction in schools. Local languages, like Konkani and Marathi, were mostly excluded from this system, which limited educational opportunities to those who spoke Portuguese.

After the liberation of Goa in 1961, language quickly emerged as an important issue in educational reform. While Konkani was widely spoken in daily life, Marathi had already been used as the medium of instruction in several privately managed schools. Educational policy therefore had to respond to the region's complex linguistic environment and the debates surrounding language, identity, and education in the state (Botelho 2006).

Over time, government policy began encouraging the use of regional languages in primary education, based on the view that mother-tongue instruction improves comprehension and widens access to schooling. Simultaneously, English became increasingly significant, especially within the domains of higher education and professional practice.

Language debates were also linked with broader political developments, especially the movement for recognition of Konkani as the official language of the state. The Goa Official Language Act of 1987 recognized Konkani as the official language while permitting the use of Marathi for official purposes. These developments influenced both educational policy and the medium of instruction in schools. Overall, language policy has remained closely connected with educational development in Goa, shaping access to education as well as questions of cultural identity and social mobility.

Limitations and Scope for Future Research

While this study is an attempt to provide a historical overview of educational development in Goa after liberation, it is primarily based on documentary sources and institutional records. The analysis focuses mainly on policy developments and institutional expansion rather than detailed statistical evaluation of educational outcomes such as learning levels, regional disparities, or socio-economic inequalities.

Future research may be conducted using more detailed quantitative studies using census data, educational surveys, and institutional records to examine trends in literacy, enrolment patterns, and gender participation in education.



Further studies may also explore the relationship between educational development and broader social transformations in Goa, including migration, economic growth, and cultural change.

Conclusion

After statehood, the quality of education has undergone a significant transformation. The Ministry of Human Resource Development recently ranked Goa University at a very high rating, following its establishment in 1985. Prior to the establishment of the university, all the institutions were affiliated with Bombay (Mumbai) University. The university today boasts several programs, like a Master's in Marine Biotechnology (integrated for five years), an MBA course in hospitality management, a Masters in Financial Services, and a Master's in Business Administration, besides the conventional courses in arts, science, and commerce. (Sardessai 2016).

The implementation of the Central Government programs in higher education, like the Rastriya Uchar Shiksha Abhiyan (R.U.S.A.), has yielded rich dividends, and there has been a sustainable expansion of facilities at institutions of higher learning in the state. The establishment of a National Institute of Technology (NIT) at Farmagudi and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Goa will take the standards of education in engineering and technology to a new high. The medicine branch has diversified with a rise in seats for MBBS and Dentistry-BDS.

The efforts of the government through various schemes to promote education by providing loans like the Sant Sohirobanath Ambiyee scheme and scholarships like the Goa Scholar Scheme have also seen a number of Goan students going overseas for higher studies.

The recent announcement of the establishment of a community college in agriculture will facilitate Goans taking up farming. There is also the degree course in agriculture at Don Bosco College in Sulcora. Such developments in various disciplines today open up new vistas for Goan youths. Recently the government passed the Private Universities Act, 2020, which will enable the private entities to establish the private universities in the state. This will play an important role in the introduction of high-end, innovative, and need-based educational programs. This will also open gateways for corporate sectors to set up state-of-the-art educational infrastructure, making Goa an educational hub.

The transformation of education in Goa therefore reflects not only institutional expansion but also the broader social and cultural changes that followed the territory's integration into the Indian Union.



Thus, the evolution of education in Goa reflects a broader pattern of post-colonial transformation in which state intervention, institutional expansion, and language politics together shaped the trajectory of educational development.

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