



## TEACHERS' EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PRE-INDEPENDENT INDIA: AN ANALYSIS

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### **Abstract**

*A sound and flexible teacher education is an imperative for quality education. Curriculum is the backbone of any education system. The curriculum of teacher education is like a mirror through which the philosophy, the vision, the objectives of the entire teacher education system is reflected. The curriculum of teacher education has been passing through a process of modification from time to time in the post -independence period in our country as our national thinkers and educationists have expressed deep concern for improving the quality of teacher education programme. But the root of this teachers' education curriculum could be found in the pre-independence period. The present paper makes an attempt to analyse briefly the main features of teacher education curriculum of pre-independent India. The method of study is historical in nature based on document analysis.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher Education, Curriculum, Pre-independence period.*

### **Introduction**

A sound and flexible teacher education is an imperative for quality education. Curriculum is the backbone of any education system. The curriculum of teacher education is like a mirror through which the philosophy, the vision, the objectives of the entire teacher education system is reflected. The curriculum of teacher education has been passing through a process of modification from time to time in the post -independence period in our country as our national thinkers and educationists have expressed deep concern for improving the quality of teacher education programme. But the root of this teachers' education curriculum could be found in the pre-independence period. The curriculum of various teacher education colleges of different provinces had been taken into account for the present study. The courses of instruction consisted of theory papers, practical papers and some special papers.

### **Madras**

The courses offered, in the province of Madras were of two types: university and departmental. The Madras University courses offered these subjects for the licentiate of teaching: human physiology, psychology, the nature of knowledge, the method of teaching English and any one of the several special groups of subjects, and practical training. The history of education was omitted as a separate subject and the subject method of teaching young children was placed from compulsory to the alternative list. The duration of the course was one year. The departmental course was also of one year duration. The departmental course for secondary training schools was imparted to the matriculation or equivalent examination passed out candidates or to those who held the secondary school leaving certificates. Instructions were given in organization, discipline, moral training, teaching and practical aspects of training.

### **Bombay**

In the departmental course of Bombay, students were not encouraged to study general educational problems save in connection with the history of education-especially that of Indian education. Two books were prescribed, one on educational reformers and another on psychology. General reading was always encouraged. On school equipment and method lectures were delivered. Besides, emphasis was laid on weekly essays, black board drawing, phonetics, elocution, and model and criticism lessons.

### **Bengal**

In Bengal Presidency (Bengal, Bihar and Orissa) the course of the University of Calcutta was followed both for the graduates and the under graduates. The course centered around the theory and practice of teaching in relation to mental and moral science, management and method, the history of educational ideas a classic on education. A course of practical training at a training school for six months or serving as a teacher for one year was compulsory. The examination included both written papers and a practical test in teaching. The course for the licentiate of teaching was almost similar excluding the history of educational ideas and study in modern English was included. According to Mr. Hornwell "the details of the courses as laid down are very imposing. They have, in fact, been much admired in America, but they are open to serious criticism on practical grounds, as experience covering nearly a decade has shown. Considering the marked difference which in the majority of cases exists between the mental caliber of graduates and that of men whose general education has come to an end at the intermediate stage the courses laid down for the degree and for the diploma are too much on a level. The aim of the higher courses should be not only to secure that the B.T. is equipped as a competent class teacher, but also to secure that he



understands the principles of teaching, the classification and discipline of school children, the organization and purpose of games and other kinds of physical exercise, the control of a small office and that he has a sound conception of the purpose and organization of educational machinery in a modern State. The aim of the lower course should be much less ambitious, namely, to equip an assistant master in a high school to do the work of a class teacher thoroughly well and to obey instructions in all other branches of school work and intelligence.” (Seventh Review page 162). It had also been mentioned “that the courses are far too comprehensive in view of the fact that the period allotted does not really cover more than eight months, several weeks of which have to be spent in convincing students that they are not heaven-born teachers.” (Seventh Review page 162). The history of education for B.T. students was actually the history of civilization so that the students would be acquainted with the knowledge of social life of various countries.

### United Provinces

The licentiate of teaching of the Allahabad University was open to the graduates. Emphasis was put on a practical test in teaching. In the choice of the subjects for this test some kind of specialization was permitted. A departmental course for the under graduates also existed.

### Punjab

In case of the Punjab University for the degree of bachelorship of teaching, a candidate had to pass the ordinary degree and had to go through the psychological, logical and ethical bases of education, the principles of school management, the theory and practice of teaching and the special methods applicable to one of these branches of study for a year. For the senior and junior Anglo-vernacular there were the departmental courses. The course for the senior Anglo-vernacular was for those who had read up to a degree at least or had passed the intermediate examination in first division and got the junior certificate. The junior Anglo-vernacular course was open to the matriculates duration of which was of two years. It consisted of general and professional studies and prepared the students up to the level as equivalent to intermediate standard. Burma had course of its own. A candidate could pursue his ordinary studies while he was under professional training. There was a change in the organization during the period 1912-1917. Three grades, namely high, middle and primary, of Anglo-vernacular certificates were issued. For a high certificate a candidate had to pass the matriculation examination or the final examination of the high school and studied for three years. For the middle and primary grade certificates, candidates had to pass middle standard and studied for two years. In 1916, there was a change in duration of the course for high grade Anglo-vernacular certificate. The duration of the course was reduced to two years and to one year for those who had passed the intermediate earlier. For entering into middle course certificate, the qualification became the matriculation or high school final and the duration was one year instead of two years. No change was made for the primary grade certificate. The professional part of each course included general principles, methods, organization and class management. Two more subjects, psychology and history of education were added in the high certificate course. At the end of the course candidates had to appear for the departmental test in general subjects and practical work, and also to the Educational Syndicate’s examination in the theory of education. The certificate holders thus became qualified for teaching in the high, middle and primary departments respectively of the Anglo-vernacular schools. Graduates were prepared for the licentiate of teaching of the University of Allahabad. For matriculates and the intermediates a departmental course of two years was there in the Central Provinces. In the North-Western Frontier Provinces the junior Anglo-vernacular course of Punjab was followed.

The preliminary qualifications and general course were of a higher nature in some of the training colleges (which are marked as higher grade institutions) than what were imparted in normal schools. The following table showed the general features of these higher grade institutions: the two training colleges of Madras Presidency (Saidapet and Rajahmundry), the Kursheong College, the Bengal English classes, the Allahabad Training College, the Central Training College, Lahore, and the collegiate branch of the Jubbulpore Training Institution.

### General Features of The Higher Grade Course

Institution or Class	Department	Preliminary educational qualifications	Length of course	Examinations	Certificates
Teachers’ College Saidapet and Training College Rajahmundry	Senior section	University degree	One year	At end of course	Licentiate in teaching of the Madras University
	Junior section	F.A. examination	One year	At end of course	Second grade collegiate teacher’s certificate



Training College, Kursheong	No prescribed course.	Selected teachers are sent for four months’ training to the European College. Two batches are trained each year.			
English classes, Bengal	Second class  Third class	F.A.  Entrance examination	One year  One year	At end of course  At end of course	Second grade certificate  Third grade certificate
Training College, Allahabad	Senior department  Junior department	University degree  F.A./ entrance examination	One year  One year for F.A. students and two years for other students	At end of course  At end of course	Senior Anglo-vernacular certificate  Junior Anglo-vernacular certificate
Training College, Lahore	Senior Anglo- vernacular class  Junior Anglo- vernacular class  Senior vernacular class	University degree  Study up to the intermediate standard  Entrance examination or junior vernacular teacher’s certificate	One year  One year  One year	At the end of course  At the end of course  At the end of course	Provisional second grade senior Anglo-vernacular certificate  Provisional second grade junior Anglo-vernacular certificate  Provisional second grade senior vernacular certificate
Collegiate Branch of the Jubulpore Training Institution	Collegiate grade  Secondary grade	University degree  F.A., matriculation, or school final examination	Two years  Two years	At the end of course  At the end of course	Collegiate grade certificate  Secondary grade certificate

**Courses offered in the higher grade institutions are shown in the following table**

Institution	Department	Subjects of study
Teachers’ College, Saidapet, and Training College, Rajahmundry	Senior section	1. Principles of education 2. History of education 3. Methods of teaching and school management 4. Reading and recitation 5. Black board exercise



	Junior section	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Free-hand drawing</li> <li>1. Organization</li> <li>2. Discipline and moral training</li> <li>3. Methods of teaching</li> <li>4. Reading and recitation</li> <li>5. Black board exercise</li> <li>6. Free-hand drawing</li> </ol>
Kursheong Training College	-----	Art of teaching, discipline, organization, and kindergarten methods
English classes, Bengal	-----	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Class management</li> <li>2. Methods of teaching</li> <li>3. Organization</li> <li>4. Registration</li> <li>5. The school building and equipment</li> </ol>
Allahabad Training College	Senior class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English reading and conversation</li> <li>2. Mathematics</li> <li>3. One of the following:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) English</li> <li>(b) Science</li> <li>(c) Classical language</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. School management and criticism lesson</li> <li>5. Practice of teaching</li> </ol>
	Junior class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English</li> <li>2. Translation and retranslation</li> <li>3. Mathematics</li> <li>4. Drawing</li> <li>5. Elementary science</li> <li>6. School management and criticism lesson</li> <li>7. Practice of teaching</li> </ol>
Central Training College, Lahore	Senior Anglo-vernacular class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English</li> <li>2. Mathematics</li> <li>3. Elementary science</li> <li>4. School management</li> <li>5. Practice of teaching</li> </ol>
	Junior Anglo-vernacular class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English</li> <li>2. Arithmetic and mensuration</li> <li>3. Geography</li> <li>4. School management</li> <li>5. Practice of teaching</li> </ol>
	Senior vernacular class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vernacular language</li> <li>2. Persian</li> <li>3. Mathematics</li> <li>4. History and geography</li> <li>5. Elementary science</li> <li>6. School management</li> </ol>



		7. Practice of teaching
Collegiate Branch of the Jubbulpore Training Institution	Collegiate class	1. Principles of education 2. History of education 3. Practice of education : (a) Organization (b) Methods of teaching (c) Discipline Same as the above (omitting 1.) for the class of school concerned.
	Secondary grade class	In both cases physical science, drawing, and manual training were optional.

### Theoretical Course of Professional Instruction

Following abstract of selected courses of various grades in the Indian training colleges illustrate the nature of theoretical instruction in professional subjects:

#### Course for the L.T. degree of the Madras University

##### I. Principles of education includes the following-

1. The relation of education to the science of mind
2. The various modes of mental activity and their connection with bodily structures and functions
3. The relation of the teacher to each mode of mental activity
4. Characteristics of different ages
5. The natural order of the acquisition of knowledge during these periods respectively, as determined by the order of development and the laws of growth and operation of the intellectual faculties.

##### II. History of Education

1. History of education (general), education in Europe from the rise of the Universities to the present time
2. Special periods or writers

##### III. Methods of Teaching and School Management

1. The site, structure, fittings and furniture of school building
2. Sanitary condition of effective teaching
3. Physical exercises
4. Books and appliances
5. Registers and returns
6. Organization of schools
7. Classification of scholars
8. Means for securing discipline, order, regularity, and punctuality
9. Distribution of school-work among the teachers
10. The appointment of time
11. Order and co-relation of studies
12. The art of questioning as a means of instruction
13. The use of lectures, of catechetical viva voce teaching from a text-book, and of catechetical viva voce teaching without a text-book
14. Methods of teaching and of illustrating each of the subjects in an ordinary school course, with special reference to the English and vernacular languages (including all the various branches of instruction falling under those two heads), mathematics, geography, history, and physical science
15. Preparation of teaching notes
16. Examination, viva voce and in writing
17. The management of a class
18. The use of black board and other appliances

#### Collegiate Grade Course of Jubbulpore Institution

##### I. Principles of Education

1. Physiology in relation to education
2. The science of mind in relation to education. It include



- a) The faculties, order of development, growth and exercise;
- b) The emotion and the will, with reference to discipline

## II. History of Education

The history of education with special reference to the educational theories of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbert Spencer.

## III. Practice of Education

1. The organization of a school containing standards from the first to the entrance class- the school building and its surroundings; the furniture, apparatus, library; time-tables, the classification of pupils and the distribution of the teaching staff, school registers, returns and official correspondence
2. Methods of teaching-
  - (a) Notes on lessons
  - (b) Oral teaching, with or without text book, with special reference to the art of questioning, and of bringing to the pupil the lessons of truthfulness, sobriety, respect for authority, and general morality, which the text book may suggest
  - (c) The best methods of teaching the subjects prescribed in the curriculum for primary, middle, high schools
3. Discipline

## Course of Practical Training

The practical course of training comprised three things: (a) teaching in the model or practicing school (b) participation in “criticism lessons” and (c) attendance at model lessons. Course of practical training of some training institutions is given in the below mentioned table:

Institutions	General practice in the model school	Criticism lessons	Model lessons
Teachers' College, Saidapet	The practicing school is divided into three blocks. Each block consists of three classes, and over each block is placed one permanent assistant called a Superintendent. The students teaching classes in these blocks are supervised and controlled by the Superintendent. At the beginning of each period the student brings to the Superintendent ‘notes of lessons’, which he has previously prepared and which show exactly what he is going to teach. The Superintendent watches the student’s teaching, and he notes in a note book the good and bad points that he observes. After the lesson is over, he shows to the student the mistakes he has made. This is regarded perhaps the most important part of the work	Each student, during the period of his training, gives three criticism lessons. A student who is selected to give the lesson prepares beforehand ‘notes of lessons’ on some subject which has been selected by the Principal. He then teaches the lesson to a class brought from the practicing school, before the Principal and the normal students of his section. At the conclusion of the lesson the Principal calls upon two or three of the students to criticize the teaching of the teacher and to notice specially faults in language, manner, questioning, and method. The Principal finally criticizes the teacher, and the remarks on the lesson are noted in a criticism register as a guidance to the Principal and to the students.	Model lessons, which are given once a week, are used to illustrate the lectures on method. Suppose, for instance, that the method master has been lecturing on the proper mode of teaching arithmetic. He arranges a class from the practicing school and he exemplifies his lectures by teaching this class arithmetic before the students. A discussion is held afterwards between the lecturer and the students.



	of the college. For the purpose of diversifying the training, the subjects and classes are changed every two months. At the end of every two months' period the Superintendents report on the work of the pupils under them.		
Central Training College, Lahore	During the course of the session every student devotes a certain time, fixed by the Principal, to actual teaching in the practicing school. Students when teaching (or attending model lessons) are accompanied as often as possible by the Principal or Assistant Superintendent, and on other occasions by a master.	Every student gives not less than two model lessons before his class-fellows during the session, under the eye of the Principal or Assistant Superintendent. The other students criticise freely at the close, and finally the officer in charge sums up the merits and defects.	Students are required to be present at lessons given by teachers of the practicing school. On such occasions they observe and take notes with regard to manner and method of teaching.

### Special Subjects of Instruction

Besides the above mentioned subjects in the professional course of teaching, arrangements were made to impart training in some special subjects like technical, drawing and gymnastics in several training institutions of the below mentioned provinces. The importance of specialization had been gradually realized and it mention had been made in the Sixth Quinquennial Review that “Its great value is at present to emphasize a fact, which is often overlooked, that a course in the principles of teaching or even practice in teaching cannot help a teacher much unless he has knowledge and grasp of his subject.” (page196)

### Certificates for Drawing

Drawing teachers' examination in Bombay had two parts: (a) paper examination in which a candidate had to give practical illustration of his knowledge of the method of teaching drawing and (b) black board drawing. The School of Art conducted the examination. Elementary and advanced drawing teachers' certificates were awarded in Bengal on the basis of the School of Art examinations. Examinations were held on the subjects themselves, not on the method of teaching. Examinations for junior and senior drawing teachers' were held in Punjab. The Principal of the Mayo School of Art used to conduct the examination. Various form of drawing including black board drawing was the subjects of the examination. Both the students and teachers of normal institution appeared for the examination. In Burma primary and secondary grade examination were held for the students and teachers of normal schools. In Saidapet Teachers' College special attention was paid to black board drawing. Free-hand drawing, black board exercises in map-drawing and the drawing of illustrations for class teaching were part of the compulsory course in Madras Colleges and schools.

### Gymnasium Teachers' Certificates

In Saidapet and Rajahmundry Colleges, classes were attached for the training of gymnastic instructors. The duration of training in the Saidapet College was one year and after one year examination was held. Senior and junior gymnastic certificates were granted in Punjab.

### Conclusion

The teacher education curriculum of pre-independence period took into account the holistic development of student teachers. the nature and scope of the curriculum was broad in general. Emphasis was given on both theoretical and practical aspects of training along with some special courses like gymnasium, drawing etc. All round development of personality of the trainee teachers was. the main objective of the curriculum. The core theoretical papers were almost same for each teacher education institution, but the optional papers exhibited a large variation. Importance of using black board had been recognized, which



is regarded as one of most important skills of any teacher education course. The three aspects of practical part: practice in a model school, criticism lesson and demonstration lesson is still followed in our present day teacher education curriculum. Yoga and physical education, performing and fine arts are some of the major components of the existing teacher education curriculum. The entire teacher education curriculum of pre-independence period was based on the needs of the then society. A close link between the pre-independence curriculum and our present day curriculum of teacher education can easily be found.

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